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CHRONICLES OF CULTURE

LETTERS & ARTS

MORALS & MANNERS

Ronald Berman

Lee Congdon

E. Christian Kopff

Ewa Thompson

Values for Money

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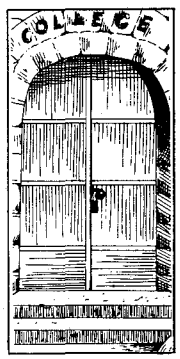

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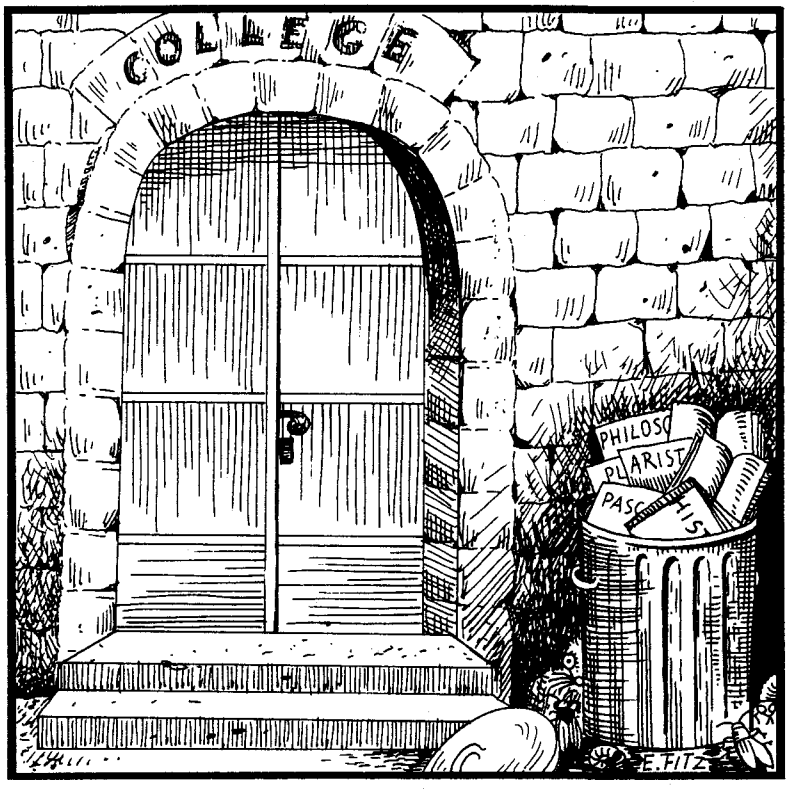
SAVING THE HUMANITIES

While political battles rage over why Johnny cannot read, the teachers of Johnny's teachers enjoy virtual immunity from public scrutiny. Their intellectual profile remains invisible to the public eye. In a sense, this is understandable. They were educated in the rarefied atmosphere of this country's great universities where the life of the mind is protected by the rules of academic freedom and by the abstractness of ideas advanced in research journals. In the eyes of the public, what goes on at such universities is a matter for specialists to discuss. A concerned parent merely talks of the desirability of more English and history courses. He cannot tell the difference between courses which



question foundational epistemology and postulate incommensurability of hermeneutics, and those which question dialectical epistemology and proclaim the identity principle. Nor is he interested in such distinctions. He will see nothing wrong in teaching "high philosophy" or "critical thinking" (which is what he assumes both kinds of courses teach) to his son or daughter. Parents have battled over high school textbooks but not over the books used at universities. The fact of life is that for an average parent (and for an average university trustee), Friedrich Nietzsche looks just as good as John Locke, and Richard Rorty seems as impressive as Aristotle.

However, conservatives are converging toward a consensus that the teachers of Johnny's teachers should get more than a cursory glance and should be offered more substantial criticism than one dealing with "too many education courses." An awareness is emerging that subject courses in the humanities do not always teach what the parents think they teach. The many years of abetting the use of American university campuses as incubators for radical leftist ideas have borne fruit.

In "The Question of Educational Work" (1921), Georg Lukács called for "penetration of all fields of knowledge by the spirit of revolutionary Marxism." It seems that in the 1980's, the American academy still responds generously to this call. Times have changed and the Stalinist version of Marxist orthodoxy is not proffered anymore, but much of what is being proffered would have warmed Lukács's Stalinist heart.

In accordance with Lukács's recommendation, many humanities courses today reflect the point of view of academics whom Lukács called the new intellectuals: those who perceive the traditional philosophical and literary canons as riddled with hidden prejudices and blind spots, who proclaim that humanistic history is one of social and political struggle, and who posit as the principal thesis of their teaching and research that humanistic knowledge ultimately derives from social and political assumptions. Not all of these new intellectuals subscribe to orthodox Marxism but their methodology is heavily influenced by Marxist thought. These academics announce to students that their epistemological heritage has collapsed and that Heidegger, Nietzsche, Marx, Derrida, and Rorty have arrived to replace it. Such propositions are presented to *undergraduate* students who have not yet reflected seriously on the concepts of substance and objectivity which were historically the first to manifest themselves to the human mind and on which our civilization rests. What filters down from the arguments of these philosophers to the untutored undergraduate mind is not a certain dynamism and centerlessness of their original vision (arguably useful to contemplate as part of the total human vision of the world), but rather a vulgarized version of their thought: that man is deprived of an essential nature, that he is malleable and must be perceived as part of a social network rather than as an entity in himself. This theoretical framework is then

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imposed upon the literary and historical texts of our civilization. Methodology comes first and the reading of the basic Western texts, second.

Lukács put "method itself at the center of our educational work." A report (released on October 1, 1984) of the Workshop on Interpreting the Humanities sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation at Princeton appears to echo Lukács in its total concentration on methodology as opposed to subject matter. Not a word is said about which works of our rich heritage should be studied. Instead, the report concentrates on the epistemological ideas of recent philosophers which have barely congealed in the research journals. The organizers make no bones about what they wanted to achieve: instead of trying to "reclaim the humanistic legacy," as did the recent NEH report, they set out to *interpret*. To interpret what? Presumably what they call "the traditional canons . . . riddled with hidden prejudices and blind spots." They had learned the conclusions of their interpretations in advance. The participants were 28 college teachers representing a variety of institutions, and they read works by Richard Rorty, Clifford Geertz, Thomas Kuhn, Stanley Fish, and other recent interpreters of humanities and social sciences.

The conclusion offers a consensus that:

> There is a need to broaden . . . the humanities by integrating class, gender, race, and non-Western culture into the curriculum. . . . Strategies . . . need to be pursued . . . to teach [students] to be not consumers but creators of knowledge.

According to the report, the participants were deeply concerned about "the danger of moral indoctrination" at colleges and universities. They sympathetically considered Richard Rorty's nonfoundationalist view of knowledge and the possibility that "knowledge [may be] a social artifact determined by the ethos of a given community."

What was the goal of the workshop? According to the report, it was "to empower participants as agents of change on their own campuses." The workshop has generated "a network of dedicated teachers who can share information about courses and methods with each other. The report concludes with a suggestion that the networking might be extended to include "teachers at the secondary and junior college level as well."

While this workshop was sufficiently academic to steer clear of political engagement, *Reading Lists in Radical Social Sciences* (The Union for Radical Political Economics, 1982) plunges directly into political controversy. It consists of 180 pages of mostly Marxist works recommended for courses ranging from history and education to medicine and health. The books are arranged into syllabi that have already been used at Harvard, the University of Massachusetts, Brown University, Rutgers University, Smith College, the New School for Social Research, and at many other places. For instance, *Transition to Socialism I: Revolutionary Movements*, offered in the Spring of 1980 at the State University of New York-Binghamton in the department of sociology, begins with "the classical Marxist writings on national and social revolutions," then moves on to the case studies and ends with "the relationship of classes to political organization [as] a central ingredient to the process of change which is envisioned as occurring within a world historic framework." I wonder whether the taxpayers in the state of New York are really interested in having this revolutionary lore propagandized at their expense.

My 20 years' teaching experience at American universities indicates that many university professors feel that there is something wrong with this kind of emphasis in undergraduate education and that the vision of the world advanced by the new intellectuals does not correspond to theirs. They are, however, intimidated and unsure of themselves. They are afraid of being lumped together with the know-nothings who blithely ignore the life of the mind of the last hundred years. Temperamentally, they are often unsuited for political fights. They used to think that there existed a gentlemen's agreement about what should be taught to undergraduates and what should be left for discussion in research journals. Now they find out that the highly debatable ideas which made their way into the consciousness of the new intellectuals are to be passed on to undergraduate students (and even to high school students) as tried and true.

Objections to the takeover of undergraduate teaching in the humanities and social sciences by the new intellectuals often shipwreck on those parts of the "new intellectualism" which sound perfectly logical and unobjectionable when presented out of context. For instance, among the conclusions of the Workshop on Interpretation are such hoary truths as "learning is an active, not a passive exercise . . . moral reasoning [is] an integral part of humanities . . . assumptions shape definitions of truth." Is there anyone who would deny any of these propositions? To take on the third proposition, one's conception of truth obviously depends on one's *a priori* views. What the workshop overlooked, however, was the fact that throughout the millennia of Western history we have shared certain very fundamental assumptions about reality, and that the teaching of them should come first, and the questioning of them, second. From the fact that these assumptions have been abandoned by some recent philosophers, it does not follow that Western history and culture should be taught "from the outside," as if its assumptions had long been proven false or as if they were no better than, say, the assumptions underlying the culture of the Mongols or that of the Ottoman Empire. The time to introduce Richard Rorty to students (not to speak of Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche) is *not* in introductory humanities courses.

But the report, the readings, and many programs which belong to the same network do not concern themselves with the tradition. They propose first to introduce to students those philosophers who are skeptical of the Western tradition, and then, when the students' mental habits have been established, perhaps to return to the "traditional canons."

Common sense and long practice have taught us that one should first teach chronological history, mainstream philosophy, and the masterpieces of native literature before branching out to other points of view. This unwritten agreement is being resolutely attacked by those who promote the new intellectualism. The general public often

(Continued on page 23)

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Inventing Lost Worlds *by E. Christian Kopff*

"It is to be all made of faith and service . . .
It is to be all made of fantasy."
—William Shakespeare
As You Like It

J. R. R. Tolkien: *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*; Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

J. R. R. Tolkien: *The Book of Lost Tales: Part One*; Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

The American tourists were in Rome for the first time and asked the owner of their *pensione* where to visit. He urged them not to miss the Roman Forum. When they returned for lunch, they were quiet and grim-mouthed. Finally, he asked them why, and the man burst out, "We never dreamed that you Italians were such chauvinists. We ask a polite question in good faith and you send us to some place we bombed during the war."

It is sometimes hard for the reader of the daily newspapers to remember that there are ruins about that were not created by the 20th century. Among those wrecks, no tourist is likely to see the broken ideal of the *doctus poeta*, as the Romans called him, the scholar-poet. That ideal of humanely assimilated knowledge and creative force gave birth to Virgil's *Aeneid*, for instance, and Dante's *Comedy*, the life-works of Milton and Tasso. Today's university provides refuge to few poets and those hired as token "creative writers." If the occasional first-rate scholar writes an important or even interesting literary work, his colleagues and his fans undervalue one side of his achievement or the other.

A. E. Housman is a good example. Recent years have seen several well-received biographies, each of which concentrates on the few months of poetry writing and his pitiable love life. His many volumes of scholarly work which rescued English classical studies from provincialism and mediocrity are viewed as a *parergon*, something to fill in the years between poems. The tone was set by Edmund Wilson, who sneered at Housman's scholarship: you see, Housman edited the Silver Latin poets Juvenal and Lucan, and refused to publish an edition of the Augustan love poet, Propertius. With such taste, no wonder his verse fails to satisfy the whole man. For this sort of obscurantism, the cracker-barrel literary critic who does not understand the centrality of Juvenal the Satirist for modern culture, the importance of Lucan and Roman *libertas*, wins not scorn but celebrity as America's foremost man of letters.

Wilson had his innings at J. R. R. Tolkien as well. The literary critic read in the publisher's press release that the professor of English and former professor of Anglo-Saxon had described *The Lord of the Rings* as originating in his "secret vice" of inventing languages, languages which then needed a mythology and history to grow and develop as historical languages do. Wilson was aghast. A narrative that grew from a desire to root an invented language in story and folklore, what could it ever be but, well, "a philological curiosity."

To give us a taste of what that philology was, Christopher Tolkien has edited seven of his father's lectures. Significance for understanding the *Rings* is one criterion for inclusion, and so we see the essay on "A Secret Vice," "On Fairy-Stories," and even "English and Welsh," since Welsh was used as a model for some of the names in the *Rings*. Even the title essay, "*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics," may have been included because in it Tolkien explains how a Christian writer could create a powerful picture of a world before the knowledge of Christ. The Hobbit-lover notices that the lecture was delivered before the British Academy in 1936 and published the next year, the same that saw the publication of *The Hobbit*. He will find it worth his while to read it.

It is scarcely too much to say that this one essay changed forever the study of a major work in the canon of English literature, that it established *Beowulf* as a major literary work, whereas before it had been treated as little more than "a philological curiosity." To appreciate the importance of "The Monsters and the Critics" there is no substitute to working slowly through the poem in Friedrich Klaeber's great edition, still in print after more than 60 years, one of the greatest works of scholarship to emerge from the American university system. With all Klaeber's indispensable aid for understanding the poem's roots in etymology and comparative folklore, he discusses its narrative structure only once, in a famous paragraph on its "lack of steady advance." How much more efficiently Icelandic sagas did in their monsters! Subsequent criticism (like R. W. Chambers's *Beowulf: An Introduction*) concentrated almost exclusively on historical, rather than literary questions. In 1936 Tolkien found that "*Beowulf* has been used as a quarry of fact and fancy far more assiduously than it has been studied as a work of art."

"The Monsters and the Critics" is far more than the literary Pharisaism than the last sentence suggests. In fact,

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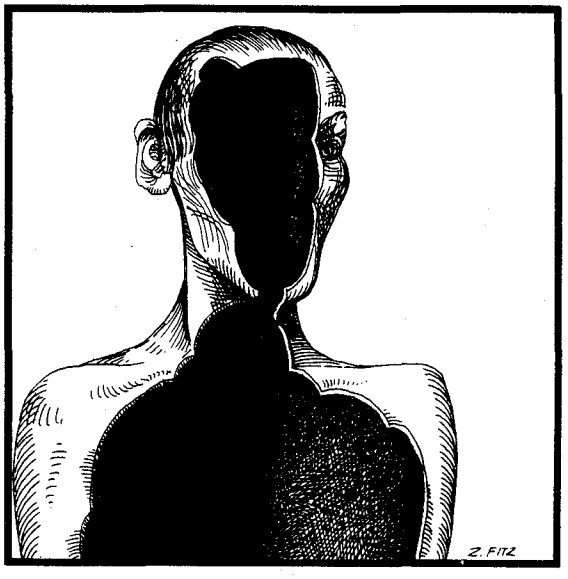
it touches on most of the poem's problems, from the putative influence of Latin epic to its vision of the German heroic ideal and the mind, at once Christian and elegiac, that created it. To call *Beowulf* studies since 1936 a series of footnotes to Tolkien would be unjust, and yet how often even the most original work ends up reflecting or rejecting Tolkien's apodictic insights. For example, *Beowulf: The Poem and Its Tradition* by Berkeley's John D. Niles is a thorough and thought-provoking study, with chapters on areas that scarcely existed in 1936; but with all his originality and critical insight, Niles's understanding of the poem is often a confirmation of Tolkien's (or a slight modification). In his final affirmation that *Beowulf* is a poem by a Christian poet, but not a Christian poem, Niles returns to Tolkien's own attitude—after a generation that has made St. Augustine more central for understanding the poem than the German heroic ideal.

Tolkien never saw himself as a literary critic. His "Valedictory Address" is quite clear about his scholarly origins in the "language" or philological side of the split Oxford English faculty. To that extent, the essays in *The Monsters and the Critics* are misleading about Tolkien's scholarship and teaching. More representative are two recent volumes, his text, commentary, and translation of *The Old English Exodus* (edited by Joan Turville-Petre for Oxford) and *Finn and Hengest: The Fragment and the Episode* (edited by Alan Bliss for Allen and Unwin). In the latter, Tolkien takes a brief and fragmentary tale sung by a bard in *Beowulf* and a fragment of a separate version of the same story that survives on a single manuscript page and tries to reconstruct the history that lies behind the two sources. For Tolkien, not surprisingly, it is the story of the fall of a great, prehistoric people and the birth of a new age. The Jutes fall with the death of their young prince, but Hengest rises from the tragedy to lead the German people into Celtic Britain and found Anglo-Saxon England. We are moved at the scope and sympathy of the reconstruction even while acknowledging that too little survives for certainty and that some aspects of the argument are forced or unlikely.

Tolkien's philology reminds us of what he said about two great epics: "The real resemblance of the *Aeneid* and *Beowulf* lies in the constant presence of a sense of many-storied antiquity." It is a trait both works share with *The Lord of the Rings*. With *Beowulf* too much is lost for a secure reconstruction of its mythological or historical backdrop. Much more can be done for the *Aeneid* and a great deal for the *Rings*. Behind its hints of ages and great races almost vanished from memory in the fading past lay a detailed history of that past, composed, of course, by Tolkien himself. Christopher Tolkien published part of that history as *The Silmarillion* (1977). Now he is editing the original versions of those stories as *The Book of Lost Tales: Part One* and *Part Two* (both 1984 in America). The characters and themes of the *Lost Tales* are closely related to *The Silmarillion*, but there are many differences: "Beren is an Elf, not a Man, and his captor, the ultimate precursor of Sauron in that role, is a monstrous cat inhabited by a fiend; the Dwarves are an evil people; and the historical relations of Quenya and Sindarin [the Elvish tongues] were quite differently conceived."

We can now do to Tolkien's own work what he tried to do to the Finn story, and we can check out our results in a way that he could not. So, in *The Lord of the Rings*, the old Ent, Treebeard, says that the evil Orcs were "made by the Enemy in the Great Darkness, in mockery . . . of Elves" while Frodo tells Sam "the Shadow that bred Orcs can only mock . . . it cannot make. . . . I don't think it gave life to the Orcs, it only ruined and twisted them." *The Silmarillion* confirmed that the Orcs were bred by Morgoth (Melkor) from captured Elves. Tolkien had written this to Peter Hastings, but never sent the letter.

Say not the labour naught availeth. Without the pedantry and sometimes misconceived ingenuity that we find in his lectures on the Old English *Exodus* and the Finn Fragment, Tolkien could not have given us *Beowulf* alive and renewed. Similarly *The Lost Tales* and *The Silmarillion* gave to *The Lord of the Rings* its depth of concreteness in language and history. We laymen, on the other hand, may rest satisfied with knowing some half-dozen Old English poems besides *Beowulf*. We soon tire of the complicated narrative and high-falutin language used on the stories that lie behind the *Rings* and long for the company of Frodo and Sam Gamgee. It is as if we had picked up a book in our motel room, expecting to enjoy the vigorous dialogue of St. John's Gospel only to find ourselves wandering with the children of Nephi through *The Book of Mormon*. We thought that we wanted a "sense of many-storied antiquity," and discover that we were rejoicing in the mystery



of fragments of stories to which our own imagination had contributed much of the tragedy and excitement. When the gaps are all filled in, the excitement has disappeared along with the mystery.

In his clever essay "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien defended the aesthetic—and Christian—rightness of the eucatastrophic closure, the Happy Ending. Herein may lie the true difference between philologist and literary critic. The literary critic is a perpetual optimist. He sees a work attacked or misunderstood, waves his magic pen, and *voilà*, all is light. Like some doctors, he tends to ignore or even blame the fragmentary and broken that he cannot restore to wholeness. The philologist lives in the tragic world of the partially lost or broken. He knows the 18th-century fire that ate away just that page of *Beowulf* that explains why the dragon attacks after so many ages of rest; he knows of an entire language, Gothic, which is lost except for one translation of the Gos-

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pels. It is no accident that at heart Wilson was a leftist, despite his love of tragedy in art, and Housman and Tolkien were conservatives, despite the latter's defense of the Happy Ending. Housman was trying to rescue, from scattered medieval manuscripts, and in the face of his century's false scientific method and false romantic sensibility, what had survived of Latin poetry. His work still inspires that continuing rescue operation, as vital as his few score gloomy lyrics. Tolkien, who had worked in his youth on the *Oxford English Dictionary*, knew that once upon a time *grammar* and *glamour* were the same word and devoted his life as pedant and poet, not to making us know that as a fact, but to feel it as a reality, the lively, moving reality that once existed before our broken and desiccated present. "Man is in love," said Yeats, "and loves what vanishes. What more is there to say?" Both the literary critic and the philologist have much more to say, of course. While the literary critic is using his rational mind to create the best of all possible literary worlds, Beowulf fights the eerie dragon of destruction, the devourer of languages, of manuscripts, of human memory. The philologist fights with him. "You and I," the professor wrote his son, "belong to the ever-defeated never altogether subdued side." He stands next to the old Norse gods, of whom Tolkien liked to quote W. P. Ker: "They are on the right side, though it is not the side that wins. The winning side is Chaos and Unreason, but the gods, who are defeated, think that defeat no refutation." cc

Supply-Side Mercantilism *by William R. Hawkins*

"In the Carboniferous Epoch we were
promised abundance for all,
By robbing selected Peter to pay for collective Paul;
But though we had plenty of money,
there was nothing our money could buy. . . . "
—Rudyard Kipling

Paul Craig Roberts: *The Supply-Side Revolution*; Harvard University Press; Cambridge.

Felix G. Rohatyn: *The Twenty-Year Century: Essays in Economics and Public Finance*; Random House; New York.

It is hard to believe that only a few years ago, political economy was dominated by talk of zero-sum societies and the limits to growth. Today, the talk is all of job-creation, reindustrialization, and high-tech investment. This reversal in outlook is one of the clearest indicators of the ascendency of right-wing themes in American politics.

The left has always been more concerned with redistributing the wealth that already exists than with creating new wealth. The early claim that socialism was more efficient than capitalism was quickly disproved in action and abandoned. The argument turned so that stagnation became the virtue of socialism. From Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* to the wave of environmentalist tracts, economic growth was equated with at best waste and at worst the destruction of the human species. The 1970's saw this attitude hit its peak. Per capita output at the start of 1981 was essentially the same as it had been five years earlier, and without gains in productivity, there can be no real progress in living standards. The public saw how a trend towards zero economic growth actually looked —higher unemployment, higher taxes, lower take-home pay, double-digit inflation, and the erosion of strength compared with foreign competitors.

The welfare state is incompatible with economic progress. Progress depends on capital investment, both in research to create new technology and in equipment to embody it. Capital comes from saving. To finance the expansion of social services, taxes were levied most heavily on those individuals and businesses which produce the most savings. The savings pool was further reduced by deficit spending which converted capital into consumption. The separation of work and reward which is central to the philosophy of redistribution weakens incentives. The promotion of a hedonistic culture and the expansion of "rights" to immediate gratification undermined commitment to the long-term task of building for the future.

An economic theory more dangerous than socialism acted as the carcinogen. Keynesianism purported to be an objective explanation of how the economy worked and how capitalism could be saved from itself. As a theory it made little sense. Saving was a drag on the economy; capital was overabundant while investment opportunities were limited. Production was automatic, but people had to be coaxed into spending money. The entire process of economic advancement was turned on its head. The success of Keynesianism rested not on its economics, but on its politics. As Keynes himself observed, since private capital formation was now considered an impediment rather than a source of growth, "one of the chief social justifications of great inequality of wealth is, therefore, removed." Those who wished to remove the capitalist class on ideological grounds could now proclaim that they were acting in the national economic interest and in accordance with economic science. Redistribution, deficits, and progressive taxes destroyed "excess" capital and increased aggregate demand. No one worried about where the goods would come from to satisfy this demand.

When the goods (and jobs) were not forthcoming and the increased demand merely pushed up prices, the Keynesian system collapsed. It is this collapse and the development of a new program to replace it which is detailed

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in Paul Craig Roberts's book. Roberts, now a professor at Georgetown University, served as the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy, 1981-82. He had previously drafted the Kemp-Roth tax cut plan and fought in the vanguard of the supply-siders both on the staff of the Senate Budget Committee and as an associate editor of the *Wall Street Journal*. It is this fight to establish a new framework for policy which is chronicled. Along the way, Roberts gives one of the clearest explanations available of supply-side economic theory.

The supply-side revolution is associated with the Reagan Administration, but Roberts reveals the progress made in Congress in the years before Reagan's election. Though Republicans were the innovators, it was a bipartisan movement with key Democrats like Russell Long, Lloyd Bentsen, and Sam Nunn providing openings. With the Democrats firmly in control of both houses of Congress, the supply-siders had to rely on their ability to persuade opponents to change their views. By 1979, the Joint Economic Committee had largely substituted supply-side ideas for Keynesian, and major victories had been scored in both the House and Senate Budget Committees. Roberts's account of this struggle is one of the best parts of the book. Ideas do have consequences and reasoned argument can change minds even in an environment dominated by partisan politics.

Roberts places some distance between himself and Arthur Laffer, whose Laffer Curve became the popular representation of the supply-side idea. The Laffer Curve, by claiming that tax cuts so stimulated the economy that tax revenues would increase rather than decrease, aroused unrealistic expectations. When the budget deficit widened in the wake of the tax cuts, critics pointed to the Laffer Curve, proclaimed it (and by extension the entire supply-side idea) to have failed. The Lafferites, in their enthusiasm, overran opponents who were concerned about deficits or cuts in spending programs by assuring them that tax cuts provided more funds than ever. The problem was that there was a time lag of several years between the cuts and the new flow of funds. The economy does not expand instantaneously. As Roberts points out, it took three years for the modest cuts of the Kennedy program to yield higher revenues.

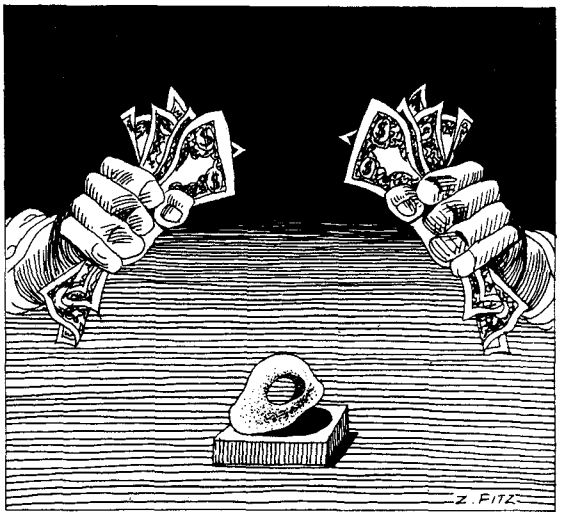
The effects on the deficit of the Kennedy tax cuts were minimal because Federal spending was kept under control. Between 1960 and 1965 the budget increased by only $17 billion. Washington's share of GNP fell between 1962 and 1965, the period following the tax cut. The tax base was expanding relative to Federal expenditures. In contrast, despite all of the talk about spending cuts, Washington took a larger share of GNP in 1984 than it did when President Reagan first took office. Annual spending 1981-85 has increased by over $270 billion. The supply-side tax cuts have opened the gap between revenues and expenditures, but more important is the gap opened between expenditures and the tax base of the economy. As long as spending remains out of control, deficits are inevitable unless taxes are increased. The supply-siders are correct when they point to the dire consequences to the economy which would result from higher taxation. So what is to be done?

Throughout the book, Roberts emphasizes that the supply-siders are a political movement. He is critical of the GOP "establishment" which argued for "responsible" policies tying tax cuts to spending cuts. This strategy was politically unpopular, which to Roberts is more important than whether it was correct. Any attempt to cut taxes provoked opposition from those who feared that their programs would be cut. To break this, tax cuts were voted without threats to spending. This widened the deficit. Roberts argues, however, that deficits which result from tax cuts are not as bad as deficits which result from spending hikes because the tax cuts stimulate savings and investment. In short, deficits are bad, but the supply-side effects help to offset them. Keynesian deficits resulting from high spending without tax reduction create only bad effects.

Yet, this still avoids the central issue: the share of the nation's resources taken away from productive activity by the government. Roberts concedes that the tax cuts did not generate enough new savings to finance the added debt. This means that there was a net drain of the capital market. The diversion of capital from the private sector to the national debt weakens the ability of the economy to grow. The tax cuts have not forced the government to control spending, only to shift the method of financing that spending from taxes to debt—not a change for the better.

By downplaying the spending issue and the dangers of the deficit in conservative circles, the supply–siders have, unintentionally, made control of the budget harder to achieve. The political bias has always been toward spending (which is popular) and against taxation (which is unpopular). Liberals have used this to gain control over more of the nation's resources than the public would have allowed had the public been forced to pay for it openly in taxes. For the right to further separate spending from taxing in the public mind can only make matters worse. The people must have the control of the purse strings thrust back into their hands whether they want it or not. The only way political pressure can be mustered to control spending is if the majority knows that it will have to pay for every new program out of its own pocket. A "free lunch" of programs without taxes is irresponsible whether promoted by the left or the right.

Roberts is right about the beneficial effects on the economy from lower taxes, but they must be accompanied by lower budgets brought into balance. That is why the next phase of reform must go beyond supply-side policy, towards a balanced budget Constitu-



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tional amendment. Within such a framework, the public must choose spending reduction or tax increases. Both the supply-siders and the economy should win that one.

"Although he is surely too serious-minded an ideologue to have planned it that way, Mr. Roberts's book yields a description of the egos, power grabs and ambitions of the people involved that turns "The Supply-Side Revolution" into a kind of old-fashioned Western shoot-out set against a dismal background of economic policy making."

The New York Times Book Review

Another issue that calls for a policy surpassing what the supply–siders have yet proposed is reindustrialization, one of several topics addressed by Felix Rohatyn in his collection of essays. Rohatyn is a senior partner in the investment banking firm of Lazard Frères. He has had experience bailing out the N.Y. Stock Exchange in 1970 and New York City in 1975 as a leader in both financial rescue operations. Though most often associated with Democratic candidates, he is considered a neoliberal willing to break with the past and adopt policies which reflect many of the concerns voiced by conservatives. This may be most obvious in his essay on the Polish debt. He advocated pushing Poland into default while severely restricting future loans to the Communist bloc. To Rohatyn, capital is a vital resource. Policy should concentrate on attracting investment here rather than letting capital flow to our enemies. When foreign operations of American banks conflict with the economic aspects of national security, the banks must yield.

This raises a contradiction which the right must face. As nationalists, conservatives want to maximize the country's material strength, which depends on technology and the economic base. But as supporters of capitalism, conservatives advocate a "free market" even when that market ignores national borders. The contradiction occurs when the workings of the global market undermine the sinews of American industrial power.

Rohatyn describes manufacturing industries in trouble:

> Harshly affected by foreign competition, unable to raise vast amounts of capital needed to modernize, they live from hand to mouth, not investing in the future in order to survive today. They are also affected by a deep structural shift not only in regional prosperity but . . . in the basic nature of American work as well —the shift away from productive industry toward consumer and retail services.

The American economy has produced over six million new jobs in the last four years, but at the same time has lost over two million jobs in heavy industry. The economy can provide jobs, but it makes a difference what those jobs are. Firms which produce fast–food and financial-planning services do not contribute the same strength and balance to the nation as do steel mills, shipyards, and auto-assembly plants. Nor do they redress the imbalance of payments since they neither produce exports nor replace imports. In time, this shift can undermine living standards as low-pay, low-productivity service jobs replace the high-pay, high-productivity jobs in manufacturing.

In the global industrial economy, there are very few free markets, no "natural" division of labor, and little harmony of interest. To operate as if there were such things is to allow the policies of other nations to determine what industries America will be allowed to keep (i.e. those industries no one else wants). "Certainly we need tax cuts and regulatory reform and a balanced budget," says Rohatyn, but we need more. His suggestion is a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation which will supply capital to those industries our economy needs to maintain and advance. Not loans which would increase the burden of debt, but equity capital. Instead of destroying capital as government policy has been doing, the government would work to create capital.

Rohatyn is not talking about picking "winners" out of domestic competitors. He realizes that governments are not very good at this, nor do "winners" need such help. His aim is to save strategic industries from devastation by foreign competitors. There is probably no more traditional form of economic policy than this. It is called mercantilism, and has been the common practice of all Great Powers when facing strong economic rivals.

The U.S. had no such rivals immediately after World War II, but times have changed. Conservatives pride themselves on being realistic. Utopian idealism and abstract theories are the obsessions of the left. "Free trade" was a concept adopted by English liberalism and used to justify the breakup of the Empire and the fall of Britain from economic supremacy. It is time for conservatives to ponder what category this theory really falls into. As Roberts says, there is a "weakness tax" paid as the world "exploits our loss of economic, military and diplomatic supremacy." This "tax" will not be automatically repealed. Positive policies will have to be adopted to remove it. While many commentators have considered Roberts and Rohatyn to represent policy alternatives, we would be better served by adopting a policy synthesis of their ideas. cc

IN THE MAIL

19 Masks for the Naked Poet by Nancy Willard; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego. The third poem, "The Poet Meets God Who Is Riding on a Pig," is representative of the collection. Question is, will Aquinas or Hormel be the better interpreter?

Paradise Restored: An Eschatology of Dominion by David Chilton; Reconstruction Press; Tyler, TX. The early Church argued for a century before finally accepting Revelation as part of the canon. Speculative commentaries like this one—which turns John's vision into a mandate for fundamentalist theocracy—suggest why many third- and fourth-century authorities were dubious.

Angel in the Parlor: Five Stories and Eight Essays by Nancy Willard; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego. "True storytelling," explains the introduction, "begins with the sense of wonder." In the late 20th century—after Mailer, Vonnegut, and Roth—a writer of delicate amazements is a rare find.

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The Emerson No One Knows *by Otto Scott*

"At bottom, [Emerson] had no doctrine at all. . . . He was far from being, like a Plato or an Aristotle, past master in the art and the science of life."

—George Santayana

John McAleer: *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Days of Encounter*; Little, Brown; Boston.

The dedication of this latest biography of the individual known to earlier generations as "the Sage of Concord" is to Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, "who at Poona thirty-eight years ago set me on my present course, when he offered me a phrase from Emerson to live by: 'Speak the rude truth in all ways.'" It's too bad that it's at least a venial sin to laugh at sincerity, for it would be difficult to find two figures so widely respected, and so widely overestimated, as Gandhi and Emerson. It is fitting that Gandhi should have felt a kinship to Emerson. And it is equally fitting that a writer who admired one would write worshipfully about the other.

Since Richard Grenier unforgettably dissected the weird Mohandas and his worship of bowel functions in *Commentary*, no further words need be wasted on that great Hindu evoker of violence, who fell victim to the hatreds he fostered. But New England and its vanished antebellum civilization remains attractive. Perry Miller, after World War II, was sufficiently drawn (partly as a result of his wartime experience) to exhume and actually *examine* the writings and behavior of the New England Puritans. He learned that they wore scarlet cloaks, were led by the elite of Cambridge, and did not allow all their followers to become church members, on the reasonable grounds that their requirements were too high. They enjoyed wine, beer, games, and wives. Their services were highly intellectual, but occasionally disrupted by Quaker "missionaries" who entered the meetings naked, with their faces smeared with black paint, or "swatched in ghostly sheets." In *Yankees and God* Chard Powers Smith said of the Quakers of that day: "Their conduct . . . was intolerably offensive, even in that coarse age. By the religious criminology of the day, anywhere in Christendom, they gave Massachusetts provocation and got what they deserved."

Puritan theology fascinated Miller. He did not convert, but he was impressed by its scholarship. It seems clear that in the beginning he had believed the usual stereotypes. As his studies extended he reverted, to an extent, to conventional academic attitudes. Perhaps he didn't want to attempt a revolution in enlightened circles: it was enough to find praiseworthy material in the long-despised Puritan period.

In time New England became known more for its commerce than its religiosity, though the Presbyterian ministers who helped promote the War of Independence, and then joined the fight, showed few signs of decadence. It was not until after the fall of Napoleon and the spread of German scholarship through Unitarianism that New England's Calvinism began to change.

The Rev. William Ellery Channing, Emerson's tutor, was probably the most important figure in that change. He led the transition from American Christianity to what, for lack of a better term, we might call *The Goodness Party*, whose adherents believe themselves to be *gooder* than anybody else.

Similar changes occurred in Britain and Germany within the clergy. Emerson, a clergyman, imbibed the change from Channing, whom he called "our bishop." The phrase is not in Dr. McAleer's book; he has managed to acknowledge that Channing preceded Emerson on virtually every important point, without making it clear that the older clergyman was Emerson's model. Without Channing, there would not have been the Emerson we know, for it was Channing who made his New England reputation by first attracting attention in old England. Emerson walked in a path already charted, had the advantage of his predecessor's efforts and example. That is not to say that Dr. McAleer ignores these details; it is to say that he does not highlight, but rather muffles them in ornate and elaborate prose.

The significance of the swing from Calvinism to Unitarianism was not a light matter, then or now. Chadwick, in his Gifford Lectures, observed that if any other civilization had abandoned its beliefs of untold centuries within a hundred years it would have momentous consequences. If such a phenomenon occurred in some other civilization, Chadwick added, armies of Western scholars would have rushed to investigate the phenomenon, but the collapse of faith in the West has been left largely unexamined.

"McAleer writes, 'We . . . are enthralled . . . by his questing spirit, the glad and surging force of his rhetoric, pouring from an ardent soul filled with the joy and wonder of existence.' More of this incautious admiration would have been welcome, so obviously is it founded on a wholly sympathetic yet not uncritical familiarity with its subject."

America

Dr. McAleer has discussed Emerson's drift from Calvinism to Unitarianism without once defining Unitarianism. A change in belief, especially when the subject is a minister, would seem to require at least some description of what the change implied. Dr. McAleer masks the anti-Christian nature of the position Emerson adopted, and makes Emerson's critics sound strident and slightly ridiculous. (One gets the impression that they are being *rude*, while Emerson was always courteous.) McAleer does not explain that Unitarianism is not a Christian movement, though Unitarianism bears the same

Otto Scott is a regular contributor to Chronicles of Culture.

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resemblance to Christianity as does the Ethical Culture Society to Judaism. In Emerson's embrace of Unitarian principles, he rejected Christianity as openly as he dared. His Divinity School Address in 1838 did this so transparently that Harvard was barred to him for a generation. (For a full discussion of Emerson's heresy, see Marion Montgomery's recent essay in *Modern Age*.)

Emerson himself didn't bother to attend even Unitarian services. After he no longer found the ministry necessary as a livelihood, he stopped using its pulpits. He walked in the woods on Sunday, which better suited his Pantheism.

"Emerson's youth was virtuous, his manhood productive, his old age serene. He was faithful to his wife, affectionate to his children and generous to his friends."
The New York Times Book Review

His career of apostasy was assisted, before the Civil War, by the contrast between his unvarying civility and the horrid ranting of a wide variety of religious cranks who broke away from traditional Christian churches and faiths to embark on weird "crusades." These campaigns—against coffee and tea, against dancing, against sports, against tobacco, and against even the mildest liquors—fit today's stereotype about Calvinists more precisely than they do the real article at any time. The self-righteous methods of the "crusaders" disrupted churches, offended older members of congregations, and provided material for anti-Christians. The tracts and attitudes, arguments and disturbances of the early 19th-century cranks established a stereotype that was later fastened on 17th-century Puritans.

Nineteenth-century apostates have been held aloft as exemplars of American tolerance, and those whom they attacked have been characterized as specimens of all that is bigoted, wrong, and harmful in religion. The apostates could not have achieved this status from their own arguments or behavior, of course. That gilding was done by successive waves of secularizing scholars, operating from colleges and universities that were originally established and funded by Christian ecclesiastics. That the stereotyping succeeded as well as it has is simply another illustration of how victors rewrite history.

McAleer's hagiography is no exception. To McAleer, Emerson was a saint. Professor McAleer softens Emerson at every hard point. His approach reminds me of the way Hollywood photographed Marlene Dietrich—through gauze. That comparison comes to mind because the professor, being of our day and time, seems to take a PBS documentary approach to his subject.

In this approach, the reader is shown Emerson under pink lights. A series of set pieces describe Emerson in relation to each of his friends separately. We see Our Hero arrive in Scotland to be greeted by the Carlyles, who are charmed. We are trotted through all their later contacts and told of the coolness that developed. Carlyle's debt to Emerson is exaggerated, distorting the reality of their relationship. Carlyle, says Dr. McAleer, is in eclipse today. Perhaps he is—among the ignorant. But he will never fade from the attention of the intellectual world. He was too honest and far too original in style for that. It is Emerson who has become a totem mummified by schoolteachers and is no longer widely read.

The professor shuffles Emerson's friends like a deck of cards and deals them out one by one. Each time the reader has to go backward in the chronology and struggle forward again. This repeated back-and-forth destroys continuity and creates a work that reads like a social calendar. This spares the author the necessity of commenting upon large events: the approach restricts the scene.

Therefore, the way in which the New England cranks combined in the Abolitionist movement is an off-stage nonevent. Dr. McAleer describes, in a carefully offhand manner, Emerson's enthusiasm for the terrorist John Brown. But he muffles its significance. It was Emerson's change of faith that led him, by inexorable stages, into such strange associations. His circle came to believe that all is permitted in a good cause.

The Committee of Six, known to American historians as the Secret Six, are not mentioned in the text. Therefore, the uninformed reader has no way of knowing, from this work, how closely Emerson and Thoreau were associated with extremists. The teacher of the Emerson children, Franklin Benjamin Sanborn, was an ardent supporter of John Brown the terrorist, and a member of the Six. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, another fallen minister, well-known in the Emerson circle, was all out for "dis-Union" and was a member of the Six. The Rev. Theodore Parker, close to Emerson, funded and encouraged Brown and was a member of the Six. Thoreau's part in the conversation and reception Emerson gave John Brown is unmentioned. That Thoreau put Francis Merriam, one of Brown's men, on a train to Canada to assist his escape from the authorities after the raid on Harper's Ferry (in which Merriam participated) is omitted.

Of course, Emerson may not have lost his faith: he may never have had any to begin with. Certainly the ease with which he stepped out of the pulpit, once his inheritance from his tubercular young bride was assured, would seem to indicate that. But it is important, historically and culturally, to note that the man who abandoned traditional beliefs and their restraints, who spoke of the "Over-Soul" in terms that led directly to his admirer Nietzsche's *Ubermensch*; the hero who would "transcend" old barriers ended up admiring a terrorist. Emerson's hubris led him to accept the concept inherent in the Hindu god Shiva, who combines both Good and Evil. Christianity opposes Evil, but a Shiva worshiper can achieve holiness through either Evil or Good. These are not minor matters. Emerson and Transcendentalism led to Nietzsche and *Beyond Good and Evil*. In Emerson's own time, his ideas led to terrorism at Harper's Ferry and the catalysis of a great war. ∞

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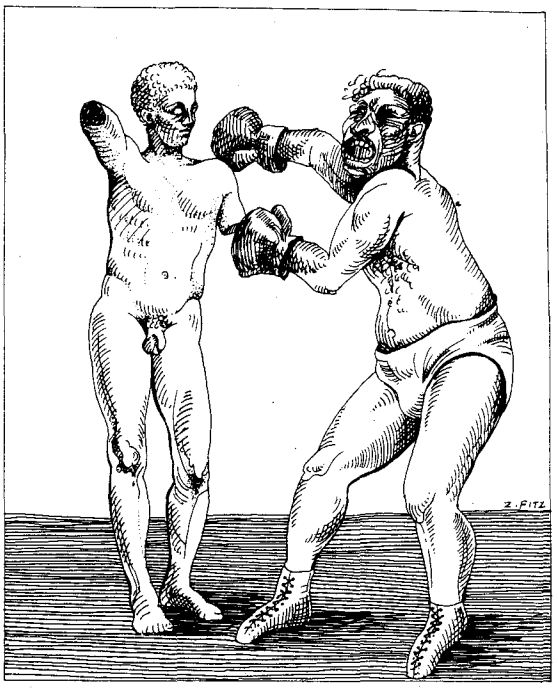
The Aesthetics of Hate *by Lee Congdon*

"Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied
To one small sect, and all are damned beside."

—Alexander Pope



Pauline Johnson: *Marxist Aesthetics: The Foundations Within Everyday Life for an Enlightened Consciousness*; Routledge and Kegan Paul; London.

T. W. Adorno: *Aesthetic Theory*; Routledge and Kegan Paul; London.

Of Marx's numerous *ex cathedra* pronouncements, none has presented a greater hermeneutical challenge to the faithful than the assertion that life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. It seemed to follow as a consequence that men could not, by acts of their will, create a new world. The classless society would be realized only as the final outcome of the logic of economic, and hence social, development. In one sense, this was heartening news because it meant that revolutionaries would not be disappointed in their hopes. But on closer examination, their assurance was seen to have been purchased at the price of denying the historical influence of ideas. In the effort to rid itself of the last vestige of idealism, Marxism had entered the camp of positivism.

Only when, toward the end of the 19th century, positivistic social theories began to yield to a fresh interest in the relationship between consciousness and society, did the "automatic" Marxism that constituted orthodoxy for the Second International begin to be countered by a theory of conscious praxis, the full implications of which did not become evident until 1923, when Georg Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness* and Karl Korsch's *Marxism and Philosophy* first appeared. By then, Lenin had laid the historical groundwork for transforming Marx from an economic determinist into a voluntarist by seizing power in Russia, a country that lacked the structural prerequisites that the author of *The Communist Manifesto* had identified as necessary for successful proletarian revolution. As the revolutionary wave receded during the years following the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, Marxists clung all the more to their new warrant for hope. Revolution might not be imminent, or even inevitable, but the barricades could again be erected if the proletariat achieved a mature consciousness of its historical mission.

The doctrine that ideas could be autonomous was welcome news for intellectuals, because it meant that they were destined to play a pivotal role in the revolutionary movement. It would be their responsibility to expose false consciousness—the bourgeoisie's blurred vision of reality—and to aid in the development of the proletariat's privileged consciousness. Precisely here Marxists began to assign new significance to art and the philosophy of art. No longer vaguely interesting distractions, these enterprises became potentially useful weapons in the arsenal of revolution.

Unfortunately, Marx and Engels never proposed a formal system of aesthetics, their statements concerning art being occasional and cursory. Disciples such as Franz Mehring and Georgi Plekhanov had had more to say on the subject, but they had joined Marxist perspectives to one or another bourgeois philosophy. Only in 1930-31 did Lukács and his Russian friend Mikhail Lifshitz, collaborating at Moscow's Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, set out to work out a specifically *Marxist* aesthetics. Concerning this important chapter in the history of Marxist theory, Pauline Johnson tells us nothing. Nor does she provide so much as a general introduction to Marx's and Engels's aesthetic views. Instead, she begins with a superficial and narrowly focused analysis of Lukács's work, one that suffers even more from her inability to read German. Barred from direct access to primary sources, she has had to rely almost entirely on Lukács's students and friends living in emigration —György Márkus, Ferenc Fehér, and, especially, Ágnes Heller.

Like most contemporary radicals, Johnson, who lectures on "Feminism and Aesthetics" at the University of Sydney, is not much interested in the proletariat. She is, however, excited by the idea that works of art can have an "emancipatory impact" on consciousness in general. A proper Marxist aesthetics must, she insists, "establish the basis upon which the recipient is able to recognize that the art work provides a better and a more convincing representation of reality than the perspective he/she acquired from daily life." For Johnson, of course, it is *a priori* the case that every conception of Western reality is false that does not entail rejection. She is pleased to note that Marxist theories of aesthetics are uniformly hostile to "capitalist" society, but she regrets that not all are able to provide an account of the foundations for an "enlightened" consciousness within alienated everyday life. Following Heller, she maintains that only Lukács, the late Lukács of *Die Eigenart des Aesthetischen*, succeeded in doing so. Yet if it is true that Lukács

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Lee Congdon is author of The Young Lukács *(University of North Carolina Press).*

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believed the present, however unpromising, to be pregnant with a better future, Johnson's emphasis on a consciousness of "radical needs" as the springboard to revolution is largely inspired, if that is the right word, by Heller's extensive writings.

In the last two-thirds of the book, Johnson discusses briefly, and inadequately, what translations she could locate of work by Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Louis Althusser, and Pierre Macherey. They, along with Britain's Terry Eagleton, are commended for their Marxist approach, but found wanting because, unlike Lukács, they have been unable to discern the promise of change in contemporary existence. Along the way, she treats us to some delicious morsels of radical esoterica. I, for one, did not know that the lamentable Althusser (who not so long ago killed his wife) distinguishes between mechanisms used by the "repressive state apparatuses" (RSAs) and those used by the "ideological state apparatuses" (ISAs). Make no mistake about it, his is a finely tuned theory.

Not even sympathetic readers of this book will be able to take it seriously. As a study of Marxist aesthetics it is shallow, poorly researched (the bibliography contains not a single foreign language entry), and unoriginal. Moreover, it offers no recognizable argument. Like Heller, Johnson simply assumes that the "real" and "radical" needs of "the people," whatever they may be, can legitimately be satisfied only by the socialist regime of her imagination. To make matters worse, she has couched this ideological exercise in prose that is clumsy and jargon-ridden. Somehow, too, she managed to persuade the publisher to experiment with a lunatic program of linguistic gender equality. This sentence —I do not jest—received editorial approval: "He/she hopes to find confirmation of his/her unique individuality by extricating him/herself from the crowded city streets."

After such barbarisms we turn to Theodor Adorno's notoriously opaque prose with a sense of relief. A leader of the so-called Frankfurt School of Social Research, Adorno made his reputation in radical circles as a theoretically dense but politically undoctrinaire Marxist critic of culture. Although Johnson had not read *Aesthetic Theory*, which has only now appeared in translation, she did not hesitate to compare Adorno unfavorably with Lukács—his arch theoretical rival on the left—charging him with having denied "any effective enlightening capacity to art." It is an allegation to which he would certainly have objected, for he too believed that art was "objectively practical because it forms and educates consciousness" and that "a change in consciousness . . . might ultimately lead to a change of reality."

Jewish on his father's side —"Adorno" was his Gentile mother's name—Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno was born in 1903 and received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Frankfurt University before going on to Vienna, where he studied composition with Alban Berg. When Hitler came to power, he left Germany for England, and after several years there and in the United States, returned home in 1949; he died two decades later without having completed revisions of his aesthetics. As even this hurried summary of his itinerary suggests, the *Hitler-Ziet* was the formative experience of Adorno's life. In order to gain some insight into the origins of his unshakable conviction that the world was a kind of Auschwitz writ large, one has only to note the subtitle of his *Minima Moralia* (1961)—"Reflections From an Injured Life"—or to recall the painful passage in *Negative Dialectics* (1966), where he asked "whether after Auschwitz you can go on living . . . whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living." In the projection of Adorno's dark vision of the world, his memory of the nazi extermination camps and his profound sense of personal guilt were always more important than Marxist theory.

It is therefore not surprising that his point of departure in *Aesthetic Theory* was the "incomprehensible terror and suffering," the "unredeemed condition of the world." Refusing to recognize any significant distinction between, say, the Soviet Union and Western Europe, he insisted that the ghosts of Auschwitz haunted "a society" in which "rationality is an end in itself and hence passes over into irrationality and madness." Everywhere he looked Adorno professed to see repression, slavery, alienation, and cruelty on such a scale that the murder of mice prompted little, if any, opposition. What was even worse, he argued, few of his contemporaries were aware of their servitude because the moguls of what he called the mass culture industry circulated the lie that the world was given and fundamentally unalterable. Marxist theorists who continually spoke of society as a "totality" —Adorno had Lukács principally in mind—were little better than those who adjusted social controls, for they took no notice of those fugitive particulars and fragments that resisted integration into the whole, the totalitarian structure of the world.

Confronted by such a world, art, according to Adorno, was called upon to wage unremitting war against every aspect of empirical reality. It could not, however, conduct its campaigns by means of direct protest, the mistake of all "committed" art. However passionate engaged artists might be, they succeeded only in acknowledging and thus legitimizing empirical reality as the immutably given. What art could, and should, do was to constitute itself an "epiphany of the hidden essence of reality," which essence was, of course, the very opposite of what it appeared to be. Avant-garde art, at its best, was just such an epiphany. Unlike Lukács, who despised the avant-garde and lionized realists such as Balzac, Tolstoi, and Mann, Adorno championed the modernists—Schönberg, Kafka, and the expressionists in particular. He had intended to dedicate *Aesthetic Theory* to Samuel Beckett, whose revolutionary significance supposedly derived from his apolitical instincts and his distance from "reified" empirical reality. By portraying a meaningless world, Adorno insisted, Beckett rejected accepted reality—which was inextricably bound up with meaning—and placed meaning, rightly understood, on the agenda.

This is an example of the fancy footwork, or "dialectical turn," that constitutes the strategic center of Adorno's theory. True art had to be negative through and through in order not only to awaken human consciousness to the full horror of reality, but

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also to provide a paradoxical vision of utopia. "Nowadays," he wrote, "darkness is the representation of . . . Utopia. Art's Utopia, the counterfactual yet-to-come, is draped in black." Utopia, in the post-Auschwitz world, was not a vision of heaven but an evocation of hell; not a dream but a scream. Indeed, reading Adorno is like nothing so much as contemplating Edvard Munch's famous painting.

Adorno distanced himself even further from more orthodox Marxist aestheticians by focusing his attention on artistic form. "Form," he wrote, "is the law that transfigures empirical being; hence form represents freedom whereas empirical life represents repression." New and dazzling experiments with form, he believed, might prompt fundamental changes in society. By breaking down order, the sense of regularity, and the pattern of instrumental rationality, such experiments worked on human consciousness, liberating it from bondage to what exists. New forms had always, however, to work with elements appropriated from alienated reality, separating them out and recomposing them in unexpected ways. Failing that, utopian reality, as the totally other, would leave empirical reality intact, undisturbed, and regnant.

What lends Adorno's writing its peculiar fascination for contemporary radicals is, I think, its striking combination of nihilism and utopianism, both of which derive, as readers of *The Possessed* know, from the same source —undying hatred of the world as it is. After the failure of the 1960's "revolution," Adorno's despair corresponded to a growing mood on the left. At the same time, however, he maintained that the dialectical imagination might yet have it both ways—despair could become the symbol of hope, the contemporary form of utopia.

Whatever attraction such ideas undoubtedly possess for civilization's discontents, they do not add up to a promising aesthetic theory. This is not only because Adorno's work was rooted in hate, but also because his rejection of the world was so complete that he could not understand the efforts our greatest artists have made to reveal meaning in the complex moral universe in which we live. If, as I believe, the author of *Waiting for Godot* is indeed a major writer, that is not because he is a sublimated utopian, but because he continues to wonder at the resiliency of the human spirit and, without passing over our terrible trials, to affirm and explore the only world we know. And that, I suppose, is only another way of saying that we are not indebted to Beckett and other gifted artists for raising our consciousness of utopia, but for deepening our understanding of human existence. cc

Trivial Pursuits *by Mark Royden Winchell*

"I shall be but a shrimp of an author."
—Thomas Gray

David Pryce-Jones: *Cyril Connolly: Journal and Memoir*; Ticknor & Fields; New York.

***A Chime of Words: The Letters of Logan Pearsall Smith*; Edited by Edwin Tribble; Ticknor & Fields; New York.**

Logan Pearsall Smith: *All Trivia: A Collection of Reflections and Aphorisms;* Ticknor & Fields; New York.

Leslie Fiedler once observed that "in our day, it is . . . possible to be a writer without having written anything." Although it would be grossly unfair to apply this generalization to Cyril Connolly and Logan Pearsall Smith, one cannot help but believe that these "men of letters" represent a triumph of image over substance. For all of the words that these two actually published, they are remembered today more for who they were than for what they did. What Mrs. Q. D. Leavis said specifically of Connolly is true of both: they revealed "the relation between knowing the right people and getting accepted in advance of production as a literary value."

Because Cyril Connolly began his career as secretary and protégé to Logan Pearsall Smith, these men were linked together in life. It is therefore fitting that the concurrent publication of Connolly's journal and Smith's letters and the republication of Smith's *All Trivia* should link them after death. What these books remind us of is that literary genres, which are peripheral for great writers, were for Connolly and Smith final forms. Connolly was a prolific journalist who from 1952 to 1974 was main book reviewer for the Sunday *Times* of London; however, he produced no distinguished fiction or poetry nor any lasting critical work. His two most enduring books—*Enemies of Promise* and *Unquiet Graves*—were both autobiographical. Despite his valuable scholarship on Jeremy Taylor and Henry Wotten, Smith is best known as the composer of aphorisms—as if his life's ambition were never to write a passage that didn't have a chance of making it into *Bartlett's*.

The life and times of Cyril Connolly are of particular interest to

Mark Royden Winchell's book William F. Buckley, Jr. *(Twayne) is now available in paperback.*

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the literary historian. From the 1930's through the 70's there were few important British writers whom he did not know. During this time he was considered by many to be the most talented member of his generation. And yet, his real gift seemed to lie in producing excuses for his failure to realize that talent. As David Pryce-Jones (the editor of his journal) observes: "Nobody could argue the if-only case more plausibly. If only he had been born in another age he might have been an elegiac Roman poet, a classical English wit and essayist, a French *philosophe* or *poète maudit*—if only he had inherited an estate and a fortune to free him from drudgery—if only he were handsomer, lived elsewhere, with someone else."

Unfortunately, these excuses tend to pale when Connolly's imagined hardships are measured against the very real impediments faced by his contemporary George Orwell. A prep-school classmate of Connolly's, Orwell was plagued by ill health, financial difficulties, and the indifference of those upper-class dilettantes who fawned over lesser writers and lesser men. When Orwell came back from Burma, his old school chum recalled, "His greeting was typical, a long but not unfriendly stare and his characteristic wheezy laugh, 'Well, Connolly, I can see you've worn a good deal better than I have.' I could say nothing for I was appalled by the ravaged grooves that ran down from cheek to chin. My fat cigar-smoking persona must have been a surprise to him." Then, after the Spanish Civil War, Orwell wrote to Connolly: "A pity you didn't come up to our position and see me when you were at Aragon. I would have enjoyed giving you tea in a dugout."

Although one should rarely judge a writer for the eccentricities of his personal life, it is hard not to do so when the text in question is autobiographical. Both Connolly's *Journal* and David Pryce-Jones's accompanying *Memoir* make much of Cyril's youthful homosexuality. It seems more than a little surprising that Connolly did not discover until well into his adult years that his most genuine sexual desires were for women (the British prep school ambience was such that during early puberty he was, in effect, a closet heterosexual). Once the truth was known, however, Connolly devoted himself to making up for lost time. He married a rich American girl and then discarded her when a glandular operation rendered her fat and infertile. ("It was like cutting a ring of bark off a healthy tree," he complained.) Nevertheless, she continued to send him a monthly allowance for as long as her own fortune held up. "In his homosexual stage," Pryce-Jones writes of Connolly, "he had seen himself as punished by loneliness and poverty. As a married man, he saw himself punished by company and worldliness."

When Connolly described the artist as "a member of the leisured classes who cannot pay for his leisure," he was speaking of himself and not his mentor Logan Pearsall Smith. Son of a prominent family of American Quakers, the independently wealthy Smith settled in England in 1888 and dedicated the rest of his life to writing whatever struck his fancy. Unlike his young friend Connolly, he committed himself to writing to the exclusion of other pleasures. (When one lady friend asked why he had never proposed to her, Smith replied that it was because she had no central heating in her house except on the ground floor.) Perhaps as a function of his image, he abjured the crassness and vulgarity of his homeland, saying "I am willing to love all mankind except an American." And yet, he maintained good relations with a wide range of American authors—from an aging Walt Whitman to an adolescent Dwight Macdonald.

According to his friend John Russell, "Logan Pearsall Smith lived for letters." He was a voracious correspondent who apparently planned his life around the postman's arrival at his house (an amazing four times a day). Thus, it was inevitable that a selection of his letters be published. Because they are designed for communication with other people, these epistles lack the cloying self-reflexiveness of Cyril Connolly's journal. They also give us fascinating personal glimpses of the many interesting people whom Smith knew. Still, one must wonder whether a life "lived for letters" is not the mark of a first-rate friend but a second-rate artist. As Smith himself admitted: "It grieves me when people I like like my writing; I had hoped that they had better taste."

Although Smith's friends were always aware of his talents as a letter writer, his fame among general readers rested on his aptly named collection of aphorisms *All Trivia*. Properly considered, an aphorism is a memorable statement which arises out of the context of a writer's thought and work. However, when such statements have no context, and are produced as ends in themselves, they must strike us as superficial and self-indulgent. Countless undergraduates have tried to speak aphoristically for about a month after reading Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. Most outgrow this tendency. Logan Pearsall Smith never did.

This one virtue which partially redeems Smith's own writing from the criticisms which can be justly leveled against it is its wit. In a letter to his mother he tells of "a high church man at Oxford—a very learned man—who would not go out at night because he had read in the Fathers that devils went about at night. He afterwards . . . joined the Catholic Church." Then, there are Smith's coinages of needed words. My favorites include: "An Abednego—one who has walked in that fiery furnace and has not been scorched. . . . Sheepgoating—separating authors, painters, and all one's friends and acquaintances into right hand and (mostly) left hand pens. . . . Gluebottom—a visitor who won't go away." Unfortunately, far too many of Smith's observations are the kind of high-minded nonsense we might expect from an apostate Quaker.

More than a century elapsed between the birth of Logan Pearsall Smith in 1865 and the death of Cyril Connolly in 1975. During that time, the modernist revolution transformed English literature in a way not seen since the invention of the Guttenberg press. In a sense, though, both Smith and Connolly were throwbacks to earlier times. Gore Vidal, who has struggled to assume the mantle of an all-around man of letters, finds "it startling to think that someone like Pearsall Smith actually lived most of his life in our century." By the same token, Cyril Connolly was no modernist, but a *fin de siècle* decadent born too late. Rather than end his life early

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by falling off a bar stool (like Lionel Johnson) or suffer martyrdom for the love that dare not speak its name (like Oscar Wilde), he became a national institution—for nearly 50 years the most promising young writer in England. For both Cyril Connolly and Logan Pearsall Smith, promise may have been its own worst enemy. cc

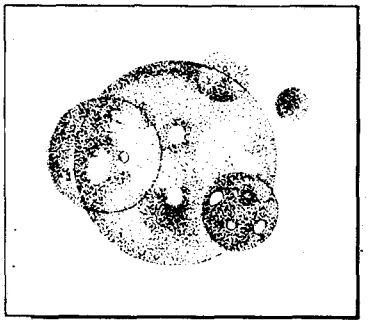
REVISIONS

The New Story of Science

What does modern science have to say about God, the mind, or beauty? As any schoolboy or high school science teacher knows, these words mean nothing. Beauty is a cultural prejudice which influences our evaluation of sensory experience in the mind, which is, in turn, nothing but a by-product (an epiphenomenon in T. H. Huxley's phrase) of neuronal functioning. And the Deity? Even if He did exist, it would be necessary to ignore Him; otherwise, we should be unable to arrive at a scientific view of the universe. What is a scientific view of the universe? It is one which reduces everything to the mechanical operations of matter and energy, which—in principle, at least—can explain all observable (and unobservable) phenomena. As one of the oldest materialists (Epicurus) observed, it is not necessary to have the right mechanical explanation, only to know that there is *an* explanation.

All these assumptions were safe, so long as the Old Story of Science held sway. Now, materialism is no longer secure, as Robert Augros and George Stanciu explain (*The New Story of Science*; Regnery Gateway; Chicago). The principles of quantum mechanics and relativity have introduced a new element into the universe: *mind*, since the observer now plays an essential role in theoretical physics. What is even more dangerous, the mind itself can no longer be described simply as a question of brain and nerves. The masters of modern neurology, Sherrington and Eccles, both affirm the separate existence of mind, quite apart from the neural processes which are its organs. Research designed to prove the mind = brain equation ends up suggesting the opposite. Wilder Penfield's studies of epilepsy are a case in point. Penfield was a pioneer in mapping out the areas of the brain related to different functions like speech. He discovered that by stimulating an area he could trigger long-forgotten memories or suppress a function completely. All of which should show that our mind and will are nothing but some sort of biochemical data-processing network. Unfortunately, Penfield also discovered that even when he made patients unable to speak, they were nonetheless thinking the word and struggling to say it. We are led to conclude that mind cannot be reduced to the speech mechanism.

Mind has in the past been discussed in relation to God—a problem which materialism was supposed to have rendered obsolete. Since God cannot exist, the universe could not have come into existence by a creative act: it evolved slowly over infinite stretches of time. Then came Gamow's suggestion in 1948, that the origin of the universe was to be found in a primordial explosion of matter, a theory which was rediscovered and confirmed by Penzias and Wilson in the 1960's. So now it seems the universe began with a "Big Bang" reminiscent of Genesis. What is more, some scientists are now beginning to consider the odd fact that human beings exist at all. According to the so-called anthropic principle, "our existence requires the universe to have certain properties" like gravity and a long time scale. It is almost as if the universe is "aiming at life and at man," as if its object were the evolution of a mind that could observe and understand it. The hint that the universe was made for man—or at least for mind—is to some extent supported by the existence of beauty. Of course, beauty is not something that scientists ordinarily like to talk about—except in relation to their own theories: "All of the most eminent physicists of the 20th century agree that beauty is the primary standard for scientific truth." The authors argue that the same principles which make for a good theory are the basis for beauty in art and nature: simplicity, harmony, and brilliance.



Augros and Stanciu are a little shaky in their aesthetic theories and completely out of their element in their discussion of psychology. The humanistic psychologists whom they praise for reintroducing mind are like all humanistic social scientists: they can't do math or chemistry and so fall back on cracker-barrel philosophizing. Even behaviorism is to be preferred to the pseudoexistentialism of Carl Rogers and Abe Maslow, who, even when they are right, have only hit upon a correct platitude by accident. Apart from these lapses, Augros and Stanciu have performed a minor miracle in this small volume: they have succeeded in expressing the philosophical implications of modern science in forceful and straightforward language which never leaves the reader in any doubt as to their meaning. Their book is aimed at a broader audience than the proverbial "intelligent layman" (i.e., someone who can read every issue of *Scientific American* from cover to cover). It can be read even by English majors who fulfilled their math requirement by taking an introduction to logic. Some charitable foundation should underwrite the cost of placing copies in every high school science classroom in the nation. cc

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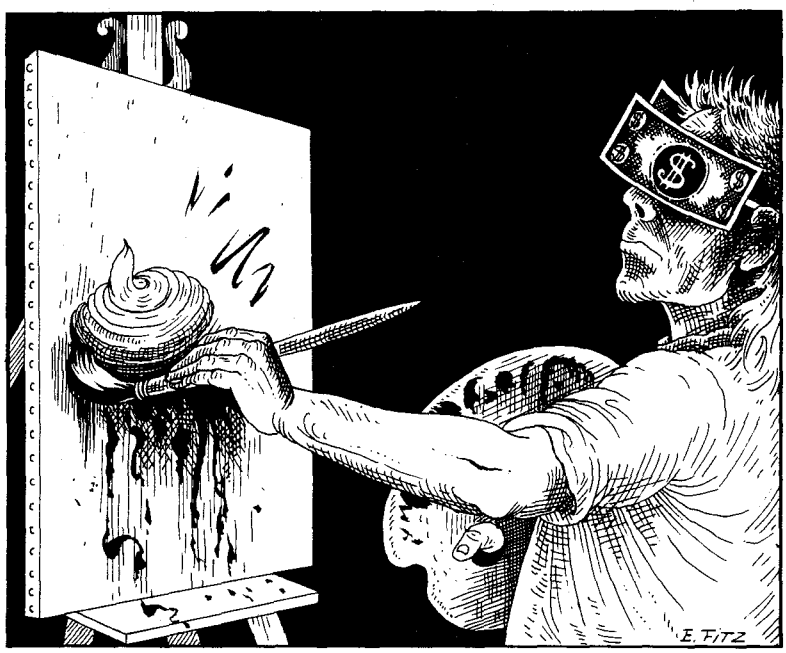
THE NEW PROBLEMS OF PAYING FOR ART *by Ronald Berman*

There was a time before public education was compulsory; when museums were run on their private endowments; when artists and writers, symphonies, and schools of dance were dependent on patrons or themselves. Things are different now: we assume that money for culture should come from taxes. The norm is for a cultural institution which serves the public directly to have its annual budget provided mostly by government. There are large sums of money involved: the University of California, for example, receives over a billion dollars a year from the state. And the tax exemptions for over 5,000 sizable foundations add up to a good deal of discretionary funding power.



The arguments of the mid-20th century for the state subsidy of art, education, and other cultural enterprise were compelling. We wanted every talent fulfilled, and doubted that the old system could do that. Under the old dispensation we doubted whether there was enough money either for the fulfillment of every talent, or for the satisfaction of the public. We wanted talent to be evaluated, so that the best came to the top. And, that the pursuit of culture was to be defended because it was intellectually good for our middle-class masses.

Looking backward, the sincerity of these arguments seems wonderfully dated. Not that they were insincere—but that they seem to have missed the point. Because we are today invited to support many kinds of cultural enterprise solely on the grounds that (aside from their aesthetic or intellectual benefit) they are good for us. Good for us as a kind of therapy or sometimes entertainment, good for us sometimes as a kind of insult to our bourgeois expectations.

In order for art, artists, or arts organizations to be funded now, some troublesome new justifications have appeared. It may be something of a revelation for us to consider in just what ways we are invited to subsidize "culture."

Having gracelessly dumped the argument that we read or learn in order to be best, we have adopted the argument that we do such things because of democratic necessity. Jefferson is often invoked at this point in order to hallow the presumption that everyone in a democracy needs to be politically wise. And, that everyone in a democracy is entitled to the benefits of culture. The emphasis is heavily on equality. Our third President did say many important things about the reliance of democracy upon the wisdom of its citizens, but what he said is too often misinterpreted. He thought that citizens should know the difference between ideas. His own life was formed upon wide and comparative reading. Because of this, he wanted an *informed* electorate—not an equally satisfied electorate. But his argument has been enlarged to the point where it has become transformed: we think that we preserve Jeffersonian pride in education, but the kind of education we get has almost nothing to do with what he wanted. Our education is utilitarian, best expressed by the current desire to be "computer literate" or literate in one of the many ways in which self-advantage can be sought. This is far from dishonorable—but it is not Jeffersonian. When the Founding Fathers recommend books or ideas or educational systems or the respect for art, they invariably mean the best and the most important. And they invariably do not mean the widest possible dissemination of benefits in the name of culture.

There is another argument, sometimes legitimated by the inference that John Adams supported the subsidy of culture. But his arguments too have been universalized out of recognition. Adams thought that a democracy should encourage the study of art, literature, and science. He meant, of course, that the *results* of the most important artistic, literary, and scientific activity should be available to us. We are now persuaded that the *intention* to be artistic, literary, or scientific should be rewarded. The difference between the two arguments has been smoothly elided. Those who say that democracy owes it to itself to be cultured may be suspected of meaning that all applications for grants should be funded.

There have been other assurances, among them that the subsidy of culture is politically moral. Nothing is more common than for us to hear that the support of art makes us more sensitive, and the resultant self-improvement becomes visible even to other nations. This is more common than one may think, and it is always in the background of

Ronald Berman's most recent book is Culture & Politics *(University Press of America).*

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international cultural exchange. But, instead of taking such exchange as a good in itself—admiring the Tutankhamen exhibition as a manifestation of ancient Pharonic genius rather than as an indicator of modern Egyptian benevolence—we politicize art, values, and ideas. After a review of arguments that those who support culture are given credit for a kind of moral reform of their national politics, Edward Banfield of Harvard has concluded that there are no grounds for such assumptions. He denies that the United States can increase what has been called its "national prestige" by the internal support of painting, sculpture, or dance. He thinks it politically naive to claim that arts subsidy contributes to international understanding. And he very much doubts that we can prove "that America has a soul" (the phrase is taken from one of his adversaries) by giving away grant money.

Banfield asks a certain number of inconvenient questions—this one, for example: "What exactly is national prestige? How is it measured: why should Americans want more of it?" Logic may be on his side. It is not only that these things are imponderable and—possibly more than anything else in this breathing world—beautiful only in the eyes of the beholder, but that there may be better ways of obtaining them. His recent book (*The Democratic Muse: Visual Arts and the Public Interest*) suggests that, if you want international understanding, practice diplomacy. If you want peace, develop a strategy for getting it in Lebanon or in Afghanistan.

And, of course, many other nations—the ones we wish to impress by artistic subsidy—seem to have less interest in that than in our productivity and power. Even during the Renaissance, in Florence and Venice, art coexisted nicely with political depravity. Its support by the state often meant that Florentines and Venetians could be *cultured* Machiavellians.

As we search for reasons for the political order to support cultural activity we come inevitably to the ideology of therapy. For some years now the arts lobbies have claimed a direct connection between subsidized culture and the resolution of social problems. We have been advised that the appreciation of art softens angst, anxiety, anger, anomie, and all the other resentments and displacements of our time. But, of course, it is clearly part of the ideology of art today that it should *create* such conditions: that the bourgeois public should be more or less incessantly reminded of its shortcomings by painters, sculptors, and other moralists. Perhaps more should be said of this later, and, for the moment, we should simply remind ourselves that one of the commonest conceptions of art, implanted through exhibitions of empty canvases or accumulated junk or other "statements" of the kind, is that the achievement of ugliness in art is a kind of punishment for middle-class expectations. The well-fed, badly educated, morally inert public out there deserves to have ugliness in view, for it is a reflection of the social order they have achieved.

I don't think that the argument holds that art reduces our social tensions. Nor that it—to use a phrase often invoked—"brings people together." This is a second therapeutic idea about art which avoids aesthetics and focuses exclusively on morality. Clearly, anything that brings us together must be a social good. But of course we are "brought together" by movies about ghouls and murderers and chain-saw massacres. These seem to me to be masquerading as art, and as forms of cathartic purgation. And of course, in the real world of art, in the world of Hemingway, Joyce, Baudelaire, and Flaubert, there is also a real and possibly irreducible hostility to "us"—to consumers, exhibiters, purchasers, and critics who represent the clutches of the social order. The artist is often trying to escape that order, not please it. And we recall that historically American literature has been a literature of exile; that it was written by T. S. Eliot in London, by Scott Fitzgerald in Paris, and by Ernest Hemingway in Madrid. I think that only the French novel can rival the American in its displeasure with its great audience.

There is an even worse argument that art not only brings us together but makes us better. Materially better—better able to cope with adolescent violence or life in the ghetto or old age or drug addiction or terms of imprisonment. These things are often adduced when the National Endowment for the Arts goes to Congress. The idea is propagated that certain serious crises in life or in society can be meliorated by the practice or the viewing of art. It is an audacious and in some ways a splendid fiction. We would all like it to be true. But there are two hidden assumptions in this argument for the support of culture by politics that, when examined, undermine everything. One is that we are all—felons and adolescents and unhappy bourgeois—artists at heart. But few of us are, and not many more are really interested in the good and the beautiful. The many go to movies and read comic books; the few go to the Met. I would not go so far as Ernest Van den Haag, who has said about modern democratic society that:

> The mass of men dislikes and always has disliked learning and art. It wishes to be distracted from life rather than to have it revealed; to be comforted by traditional (possibly happy and sentimental) tropes, rather than to be upset by new ones. It is true that it wishes to be thrilled, too. But irrational violence or vulgarity provides thrills, as well as release, just as sentimentality provides escape.

I might agree not to the extent that the many hate art, but that they are indifferent to it.

The second hidden assumption is a much bigger one: that interest in art means interest in art. Here is a statement taken from the *Congressional Record*:

> Iowa has one of the highest percentages of population aged 65 and older. It is therefore particularly fitting that the Iowa Arts Council this year provided assistance to the Iowa State Commission on the Aging for a senior citizen arts festival, an event which proved highly successful and which I hope will be repeated yearly. We have an immense reservoir of training, experience, and talent in older Americans—upon retirement they have increased time to devote to these talents, to their crafts and hobbies. The federal, state, and local programs in the arts should take particular cognizance of their needs and their potentialities.

One wonders if there is anything in this otherwise public-minded statement which actually refers itself to art. As I

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interpret it, it is a fairly open proposition that one state-subsidized agency should support another in order to satisfy a constituency. The constituents have identified what they do—which is the production of crafts and hobbies—with something else. In order technically to qualify for funds, what they do has been called art. But the bottom line is that they are being rewarded for having attained seniority, and for having organized themselves in a politically conscious way. Clearly, any group could do so within a congressional district: the young, minorities, unions, the unemployed. There can be no objection to their organization as such—only to the unpleasant fact that the public manifestation of private desires qualifies for monies undeserved.

Iowa is of course not alone—southern California is the great home of arts festivals. Periodically throughout this part of the state streets are closed, parks are opened, and hundreds of well-meaning, untalented, self-ascribed artists display *their* crafts and hobbies. We have, by the way, more than a million of them in this country if we can trust the last census. That number of people have described themselves as artists by intention. Is this country blessed by having many hundred thousand more artists than ever flourished in the Florentine Renaissance? One doubts it. The test, after all, is not the intention but the work. We are so used to praising the idea of creativity that we confuse intentions with works.

"Festivals" have become familiar urban events. In some ways they are entirely delightful. But they tend to transvalue things: rock music becomes a concert; the consumption of goods becomes the acquisition of art; crafts and hobbies become the achievement of art. Festivals exist because cities are anxious to have turnstile statistics proving that they are all little San Franciscos. They want to be blessed by the media and to qualify for state funds. But in actual practice, a certain amount of municipal activity is like the following, described last year by a writer for the *Canyon Times* of Denver, Colorado:

> If only Shakespeare could be at this year's Arts Festival to see his play *Macbeth* performed on roller skates! In a 15 minute adaptation of the play, written, produced and directed by local artist Gerald McDonough, Macbeth will roller skate his way to treachery on Friday, June 25, at 5:45 p.m. in front of Symphony Hall.
>
> However, the 15 minute version isn't quite as tragic as Shakespeare's version. According to McDonough, the play is a liberal interpretation of the original, integrating a cast that includes little Joe McDuff and Long John Silver, as well as a Lady Macbeth, who rides a moped. . . . The production is sponsored by the Salt Lake Council for the Arts.

There is no use debating whose shame is the greater: the director's, the Salt Lake Council for the Arts's, or William Shakespeare's. The point is that interest in art does not really mean interest in art. It means that whatever can be done to attract public interest, satisfy constituencies, or attract funds will be done. There are many corollaries. One is that it becomes easy to give a little something to every claimant for funds. A second is that every claim on funds made in the name of art is legitimate. There has been a fatal confusion between the object of producing works of art, and the object of satisfying artists.

We all know that subsidy and its distribution are very different. Out of the original and noble intention of supporting art comes the political reality of diffusing money with political impartiality in its name. There are other problems for democratic societies. I will be talking at this point about the rationales for art patronage in Great Britain, a country which is often invoked along with Austria as an example for our own donatives. But it is a country which has experienced the same kind of troubles patronizing art as we have: it does not have fewer problems; it just has experienced them sooner. The major problem is that, although there is a British Arts Council in place, an organization which subsidizes about half the budgets for museums, libraries, and the practice of art, its budget (much larger in proportion than that of the National Endowment for the Arts) can never satisfy all those who desire to share it. There is now a bitter conflict between professionals and amateurs, between aristocrats and the

REVISIONS

Feisty Feuilletonics

Readers bored to tears by the conventional pieties of most of the nation's pundits will find refreshing irreverence in *The Liberal Crack-Up* by R. Emmett Tyrell Jr. (Simon & Schuster; New York). But they may well recall the appearance two years ago of another book by a leading conservative journalist, *Statecraft as Soulcraft* by George Will. Tyrell, like many others on the right, did not much care for Will's book of vague and toothless theorizing. But however different his own book may be in content, tone, and style, it prompts a similar perception: the author would do better to stick to short pieces.

Tyrell's production does at least enjoy one advantage over Will's: it can be enjoyed in short snatches. Taken three or four pages at a time, the freewheeling ridicule of liberal enthusiasts—of Tom Hayden flooding the living room of his Santa Barbara home with water from a rooftop solar collector, of Norman Mailer hailing Jimmy Carter in 1976 as a "political genius," of the "lunatic sisters" of radical feminism fighting for women's right to collect garbage—is delightfully amusing. Taken in larger doses the frenetic wit begins to seem forced. The book's thesis—that "the sensible Liberalism of yore" disintegrated in the 1960's and 70's into a congeries of mindless crusades—is unexceptional, but barely holds the author's rapid-fire assaults on liberalism together. The fragmentary and fitful attempts at serious original analysis rarely do more than put a peculiar strain on the journalistic humor. Tyrell's work will evoke some hearty laughs, as will the dust jacket comparing him to H. L. Mencken. cc

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middle class, between bureaucrats and politicians, between great institutions of the arts and small, unnoted regional hopefuls, between established forms like opera and the yet-to-be-evolved forms of avant-garde. Far from settling the matter of arts patronage, the operation of the British Arts Council seems to have made hostilities much more visible. And clearly the object of most hostility is what one writer has called "the general right to participate."

If art is thought of as without standing definitions—a process or activity which everyone can share not as *audience* but actually as *artists*—then clearly it becomes difficult to justify the old style of patronage. Why give money to the Royal Shakespeare when the man in the street deserves equally the chance to manifest his artistic potentialities? Under the name of experimental art or public art, depending on which country we are talking about, new propositions are generated faster than the money to support them. Art for youth or for age. Art in public places or for unions. Art laboratories or experimental centers. Art for most things which, finally, will attack and defeat the obsolete bourgeois tradition. As an extension of political theory, art for everyone tends to mean that the old patrons, institutions, and ideas will be rejected by a society newly conscious of its political aims.

We tend to think that art should entertain or inspire. But Raymond Williams, read on both sides of the Atlantic and representative of many academics here and abroad, thinks of it as a terrain important to capture in the war against the middle class. According to one of his recent statements, our cultural institutions are really arms of the state. Schools and museums do nothing more than inculcate tired old middle-class values. They make us respect values that no longer matter. And he is enraged whenever a museum pays millions for an acquisition, or when a class of schoolchildren is taken to an exhibition which suggests to them that art is a realm separate from most people's lives, and an activity which is based upon natural distinctions of talent. It is important for his argument to see art as a kind of bribe of the state: a package of meaningless but attractive values exhibited in a temple of the middle class. The Romans had bread and circuses to distract the masses; we have art to give them the illusion that life matters, that our form of government has any humanity at all. Clearly for Williams and for many others art should be a form of new consciousness: it should make us aware not of the beauty in the eye of the artist but of the ugliness of capitalism.

It is exceptionally interesting to see what the aims of this kind of art are. The goals of an artist working in any medium are no longer to produce something which had not existed, or existed so well before. It is certainly not to create beauty. Here, in Williams's words, is what art should suggest: "A redivision of labour; unrestricted access to general education; a childhood centred on the capacity for development rather than geared to economic performance; a new communal life based on autonomous group activities." In short, a new life. Art is not a produced object, but an idea about ideal human relations. It is something we all do in our daily lives, not something done only rarely by an individual with distinctive talent.

As you can see, the reasons why we should have the state patronize art are almost too various to organize. But there are some major themes: we should support either what is traditional, or what is new. We should either use art to glorify the state, or to delegitimize it. Art is therapy for social pathology, a useful activity for the retired; a reminder of democratic equality. It may even be a reward for constituencies. Running through each of the arguments I have described is one common theme: that art is utilitarian. It is good not in itself, but insofar as it serves something else. There is another theme conspicuous by its invisibility: that there is no particular reason to support art for aesthetic purposes.

The government subvention of art, not to speak of our general understanding of art, has become almost terminally confused. Art now means almost anything: it can be a painting by Titian purchased for five million dollars by the Met or the hanging of thousands of square yards of dry wash over the Colorado River or simply any individual intention to be creative. Possibly some attempt should be made to straighten out not only these matters of definition and identity, but the actual problem of giving money to promote artistic production. That seems to be necessary. As Banfield has noted, one "Vito Acconci is said to call the *New York Times* regularly to announce that his breathing is art." And Michael Straight, the former vice chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts has cited among others the following application for funds:

> I will rent a ground level studio with high ceilings and a cement floor, adjacent to a lush meadow. And to this place I will bring some friends and some strangers. I will bring Pigme, a full grown sow (whom I have known since her ninth day), two female rabbits (who know each other and me), a buck (stranger), two ringed neck doves (strangers), a woolly monkey, Georgina (who knows me slightly), a cat, Blackflash (who knows me), a young boy, Brett (who knows me and the two female rabbits), and a young girl, Lavina (who knows me and Brett slightly). We will all move in together.

The proposal continued to suggest that this would be a form of environmental art with social utility. Although it requested funds for video equipment and a motorbike, its emphasis clearly was on what it called "the educational value, for all of us." Two things might be noted about this. The first, that the artist knows current dogma. While the statement is profoundly silly the ideas are all in place: that art is a kind of personal development, that it affects the "environment," that it has social consequences, that it is educational. A second point is possibly more interesting: the proposal was funded.

Hard cases make bad law. But the manifestation of many such cases indicates that a message sent has been received: it is not that this is an anomaly, but that it reflects in its tiny, mindless way the misconceptions which feed such responses. To insist that art is an intention rather than a creation is to create such little Frankensteins.

There are certain governing themes to political subsidy. One is that it should be wide rather than deep: better to give *some* money to everyone than no money to those who may support you. Or rise up in arms against you. This makes it difficult to construct a British Arts Council and its four great

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national theaters, or a Vienna Opera, which flourishes in Austria precisely because few other enterprises are allowed to compete with it. Built into our political process is the wisdom, so-called, of distribution. Second, there is the wisdom of equality. As one looks through the annual reports of the National Endowment for the Arts, the *Congressional Record*, and the various statements of the various chairmen of NEA over the years, there is a striking reminder of the political theme of equality. That is, there are literally no references to differences between artistic works or cultural enterprises. No hierarchy of values has ever been published in the sources I have mentioned. In fact, when invited to comment on differences of quality in art, and differences of importance in cultural enterprises, the spokesmen have politely declined. One chairman, memorably, a few years ago, said that he was not capable of making distinctions between works of art; and that in any case it was up to government only to grant funds. A third important theme is accountability. The reason why the idiotic proposition that three people should cohabit with a household of rabbits, monkeys, and a full-grown sow was funded is that the project offered two great sops to modern conscience. One, that art was good for something—it led to a resolution of an identity crisis and educated all concerned in some way that resonated to current mass illusions. And, in some wacky way it was an offshoot of the environmental movement, capturing the respectability through its allegiance that it lost through its mindlessness. The proposal was able to claim, as Rembrandt could not, that it was good for all concerned in more than aesthetic ways.

Ideally, one supposes that we should have two sets of government patrons, two National Endowments for the Arts and for the Humanities. One NEA would support art, and the other would give money away for good causes. That being unlikely, the problem remains to get government patrons to spend our money wisely. A number of things suggest themselves. For example, grants are now customarily given before the fact. This goes counter to a sound practice both in and outside of cultural enterprise: to judge productions comparatively. Historically, competitions in the arts have produced important works, from the time that Michelangelo had to compete for the design of Saint Peter's, to the time that Van Cliburn had to compete for the Tchaikovsky Prize. Competition did very little harm, and a noticeable amount of good. In fact, it has generated public interest and persuaded the public that discernible standards were being invoked. By all means there should be more comparative evaluation, more prizes, more reasons adduced as to why certain things deserve patronage.

That last suggestion has been taken up publicly in England, in which the argument about state patronage is far more visible, and much more intelligently conducted than it is here. The books now coming out, like Robert Hutchison's study of the politics of the British Arts Council, Richard Hoggart's attack on traditionalism, and Harold Baldry's very levelheaded assessment of just about all the arguments for and against patronage plainly give us what we in this country do not have: a debate between acknowledged choices. Hutchison describes the Arts Council panels as constituting a kind of subculture which is, he says, "cosy and incestuous." These panels ought to be changed frequently. Their work should be acknowledged publicly. In fact, according to Hutchison, they should publish their assessments of the artists they support. They should maintain case studies of the way that proposals become grants.

In the great race that we have instituted here to support major museums, dance companies, and theater groups, and at the same time to diffuse money as rapidly, widely, and thinly as possible to all other conceivable claimants in order to assure their support and prevent their opposition, one thing of value seems to have been left out. That is artistic training. We have no counterpart to the extraordinary Soviet system of identifying artistic talent, training it, and allowing it to compete for status in, say, the national ballet. Granted, the system is in some ways cruel, given the huge difference between those who begin the program and those who complete it successfully—but at least the program means business. The Soviets have a great ballet system, oddly enough, not because they use communistic methods to develop it but because it is so intensely competitive. I know of no enterprise here which even begins to compare with the kind of training that people in music or dance or theater get in the Soviet Union or in Great Britain at one of the academies. The object of cultural expenditure with us seems to be to meet immediate expenses, to discourage opposition by bribing it, to put on productions. There is simply no program which intends, over a long period of invested time and money, to educate willing talent.

A final reform: we all must have noticed that, say, the Mellon Foundation, although not entirely satisfactory to everyone, yet has a considerable degree of independence from everyone. But government foundations seem to have less and less independence. In the relatively short time since they were inaugurated, Congress has made some

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monumental changes in their activities. It has forced them to give up 20 percent of their annual budgets to state councils in the arts or humanities. It has named individual grantees, free from competitive application, like the American Film Institute. It has in the name of accountability insisted that the trustees of each National Endowment be approved by the Senate—with the result that a significant number tend to have been involved in Presidential or Congressional campaigns. One of them was the wife of a senator who supported the change in legislation. This seems not quite cricket to the rest of us. Possibly we need national endowments free of what in politics is gravely called "accountability"—a phrase which says that it means open to scrutiny but which may be said to mean vulnerability to lobbies. Possibly our endowments ought not to have their budgets gone over each year, and their leadership subjected to Congressional pressure: it may be that the Mellon Foundation, which goes on quietly producing what it does each year, is costing less in wasted energy and diverted funds. When politics helps culture, it should have the good sense to let it go.

We need to remind ourselves of why we bother at all with the support of culture, or with its definition, or with its accomplishment. As politics becomes ever more specialized and constituency-minded, more ideological and connected to party doctrines, our energy and our attention seem to shift to the realm of culture. The great national debates are not really on foreign policy—that is only what interests the media. Most people are deeply into themselves. Far more of them are intimately concerned about jogging and weight loss than with the opposing kinds of regimes in Nicaragua and El Salvador. The books that sell and the programs that are listened to have not much to do with capitalism versus communism: they are about personal experience in capital letters, raised to a kind of religion. This being the case, sometime or other we will have to make sense out of our ideas and tastes and styles. The whole realm of culture, once safely the province of universities and other harmless places, has suddenly become the realm of the passionate majority. Everyone now has a passion for defining the good life, a job for which philosophers alone once had any calling. I would guess that we had better have some reasonable ideas about the good life handy. Especially because of our habit of calling upon government to legitimate ideas. One of the great ironies of our time is that while we have deregulated the economic marketplace we have done just about the opposite in regard to values, prejudices, tastes, styles, and beliefs. Everyone in this country seems, more or less, to want to pass a law about the perils or benefits of abortion or smoking or nonaddictive drugs or the rights of any collectivity to anything. If we don't have any clear ideas about values, we will find that government, having given up intervention in the manufacture of widgets, will be very happy to tell us what to like. It will certainly tell us what is good for us. And if we don't have any resistance to that, or any clear idea of values, then we'll never be able to reason out why one book or painting—or idea—is better than another. cc

Saving the Humanities

(Continued from page 5)

does not see it, because academic takeovers are camouflaged by the abstruse vocabulary of ivory-tower discussions. Yet at many universities, students taking humanities courses are corralled into a pen marked by the works of Karl Marx, Martin Heidegger, and Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as by the more recent and less distinguished subjectivists: Michel Foucault, Richard Rorty, Stanley Fish. Prestigious foundations sponsor the development of programs which teach students how to distrust the civilization to which they owe both their material well-being and their intellectual sustenance. These are the same charitable foundations whose top officials publicly express concern over the decline of educational standards. At lower levels, however, grants are dispensed to sustain ideas which have negative value for undergraduate education. While such authorities condone and support, can parents fail to follow suit? Of course, they simply demand more humanities courses without asking what kind of vision is being promoted in them. They assume that there still exists a gentlemen's agreement about what kind of acculturation such courses provide. But if the leaders of the Workshop on Interpreting the Humanities have their way, Humanities 101 might be designed to alienate students from their culture rather than to deepen their participation in it.

According to the Report of the National Endowment for the Humanities released on November 26, 1984, one can graduate from 72 percent of American colleges without having studied American literature or history. The outcry for more humanities courses is likely to grow louder as an awareness of these and other figures grows in society. The hundreds of "new intellectuals" with tenure at American universities stand ready to promote "the new literacy." Parents and trustees are cowed by the distinguished names and titles in the syllabus and remain largely unaware that the most popular prof may be the one who teaches students contempt for their own culture.

The building of an awareness of such problems is difficult because the general educated public is remarkably nonideological. Inquiries into *how* the humanities are taught are likely to be confused with a call for better teaching, for a more dazzling presentation, or more "relating" to students; in other words, with a comment on the technicalities of teaching. But technicalities are the least urgent problem of the day.

The teachers of our teachers being thus taught, they teach the future teachers likewise. The future teachers in turn become disoriented philosophically and ready to be skeptical of the structuring of human experience that constitutes a foundation on which Western societies have built their unprecedented successful and comfortable present. The networking of the radical philosophy goes on while university presidents engage in fund-raising and their administrative assistants settle arguments about the place of football in academia and debate complaints about parking tickets.

—*Ewa M. Thompson*

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COMMENDABLES

Poisoned Ivy Redux

by Herbert London

Benjamin Hart: ***Poisoned Ivy***; Stein & Day; New York.

For at least four decades liberal pieties have ruled the cultural roost at Ivy League colleges, a situation that William Buckley described in *God and Man at Yale*. What Buckley did not describe—what he could not have anticipated—is the challenge to this orthodoxy that has been mounted in the 1980's. Reagan's Presidency has undoubtedly had some influence on the climate of opinion in academe. But the challenge predates his stunning electoral victories.

In 1980 several students founded a lighthearted, irreverent, high-spirited paper called the *Dartmouth Review*. From the beginning many Dartmouth faculty members and administrators violated all the dicta of democracy they normally espouse. They have systematically violated the Constitution they defend as the bulwark of their freedom. And they have violated the traditions of fair play and free exchange to which they regularly give lip service.

This story is recounted by Benjamin Hart in his book *Poisoned Ivy*, an often hilarious, sometimes sad, and usually provocative examination of life at Dartmouth College. What he demonstrates most poignantly is that the halls of Ivy have been converted from ivory towers of scholarship and dispassion into political action launching pads for gay rights, women's liberation, black militancy, and the assorted lunacies now institutionalized in the post-Vietnam era.

Because the *Dartmouth Review* attacked the faithful, it became the target of the true believers. That in itself is hardly surprising. What is shocking is the virulence of the reaction. When Hart delivered the *Dartmouth Review* to an administrative office, he was confronted by a black middle-aged college official who attempted to push him through a plate glass door. This unprovoked assault did not result in retaliation. Instead the victim tried to restrain his attacker by using a headlock. Several seconds later Hart noticed that his "sweatshirt was soaked with blood from a four inch wound" inflicted by a bite on his chest. After receiving treatment for the wound and a tetanus shot, Hart filed assault charges against his attacker and won the case.

However, three days after the assault the Dartmouth faculty assembled and voted 113-5 to censure the newspaper Mr. Hart was distributing, not his assailant. During that curious time, free speech and the free press were suspended (to say nothing of reasonable discourse). The *Dartmouth Review* had so offended the sensibilities of the faculty that it, rather than the violent behavior it evoked, became the target of opprobrium. Admittedly, the *Dartmouth Review* can be outrageous. What offended most faculty members was its style; for the *Dartmouth Review* is the literary equivalent of *Animal House*. However, in these times students are usually encouraged by their faculty elders to commit offenses against taste. The shock came from the fact that this challenge to the status quo came from the right. It was not fraternities they questioned, but affirmative action; it was not a policy of parietals they ridiculed, but black studies. The students took on the left establishment using the style of Tuli Kupferberg and other leftovers from the turbulent 60's. They gave the provocateurs a taste of their own medicine. But instead of recognizing this effort for what it was—an attempt to balance opinion—the academics nurtured on 60's rhetoric let out a cry of "dirty pool."

The reaction could have been predicted. College faculties have, to an extraordinary degree, been politicized. The student rebel of yesteryear is now a tenured professor with standing in the faculty senate. Current political attitudes have had only marginal success at our universities because the 60's revolution has put a liberal edifice solidly in place. Where is the professor with sufficient temerity to take on the gay student alliance? Where is the university president who challenges the intellectual integrity of women's studies?

Undoubtedly there has been a shift in college attitudes. But it is not as pronounced as most journalists suggest. What has happened is that the left-wing gospel regularly confronts student apathy and agnosticism. That may not be a major victory for those of us who would like to restore a passionate concern for fair– and critical-mindedness to our colleges, but it's nothing to sneeze at. After all, we will have another four years of Ronald Reagan, the *Dartmouth Review* continues to publish, and Benjamin Hart and his stalwart editors are now writing books and influencing public opinion. ∞

Herbert London is dean of the Gallatin Division of New York University.

Ascent to Wisdom

George Caspar Homans: ***Coming to My Senses: The Autobiography of a Sociologist***; Transaction Books; New Brunswick, NJ.

George Homans has had certain advantages not ordinarily granted to a social scientist. His distinguished New England ancestry, for example, included successful physicians, lawyers, and men of business—to say nothing of the Adamses (his mother was the niece of Henry and Brooks Adams). Added to the solid pleasures and benefits of a boyhood on Massachusetts Bay were the fruits of Homans's student days at Harvard. His friend and tutor was Bernard De Voto and his teachers included Ivor Richards, who was also responsible for Homans's introduction to Wyndham Lewis.

Another strong point in the future sociologist's favor was the fact that he studied no sociology as an undergraduate. His interests were literary, but after losing out in a literary rivalry with James Agee, he gave up his ambition to make a career as a poet. His comment on this youthful decision is characteristically frank:

> Note the wretched competitiveness of this young man! Note his worship of success! But note also, you smug liberals, who sneer at compe-

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> tition while practicing it avidly, that my silent competition with Jim Agee led me to reach a better decision about my future occupation than the one I might have reached without it. By competing I learned where *not* to compete.

Homans was also fortunate in picking up his sociology largely on his own and under the inspiration of a gifted biochemist, Lawrence J. Henderson. The formative intellectual influence was Vilfredo Pareto, whom he started to read at De Voto's suggestion. Two years after his graduation, with still no formal training in sociology, Homans coauthored *An Introduction to Pareto* (1934). As a junior member of Harvard's Society of Fellows (he never advanced beyond a B.A.) he divided his time between boning up on the social sciences and working on a study of rural life in Medieval England. His *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century* turned into a sort of personal search for his roots. His researches led him to trace the customs of East Anglia (the land of the Homanses) to Friesland —an hypothesis not widely accepted by British historians.

His professional career was interrupted by the war, and Homans devotes several interesting chapters to his less-than-exciting naval career, as well as *excursus* on the time he spent sailing under his uncle Charles Adams. However, the chief interest of Homans's memoir is the account he provides of his development as a sociological theorist. His major contributions to the field, *The Human Group* and *Social Behavior*, lie more in the realm of social psychology than pure sociology. As a theorist, he is an unashamed psychological reductionist. Even before World War II he had concluded:

> There was a single human nature, single in its general characteristics. . . . Therefore my general propositions would have to be psychological rather than sociological, propositions not about groups as such but about what human beings have in common as members of a species.

This firm stand on human nature sets Homans at odds with nearly every school of modern social thought, including the followers of John Dewey, Franz Boas, Jean-Paul Sartre, Karl Marx, and B. F. Skinner. Groups that have nothing else in common are in agreement on one point: the malleability of human clay. If there were such a thing as "the common human," then we should have to rethink a great deal of the social experimentation that has been done in the name of Marxism, feminism, and progressive education. To Homans's everlasting credit, he was among the few American social scientists of his generation who dared to affirm the universality of human social behavior.

Unfortunately, Homans's decision to concentrate on individual behavior rather than on social organization also had negative consequences. It led him to reduce social units down to assemblages of individuals interacting according to certain psychological principles —as if man born of woman has ever existed outside the social context. In a way, it is a sort of trick of perspective —like looking at a painting of Seurat. If you stand very close to the canvas and examine the dots, all you will see is dots that group themselves in certain arrangements of color and shape. It is not until you stand back and look at the whole that you can learn to see the forest despite all the trees. In much the same way, Homans's "methodological individualism" is apt to lead to a distorted—perhaps libertarian—perspective on social relations. On the other hand, it can also serve as a healthy corrective to the tendency, particularly prominent in French sociology since Comte, to treat "social facts" as if they were real entities. Homans correctly perceives that his method, because it only looks at one side of the coin, has to be supplemented by a more structuralist approach.

Homans summarizes his theory of social behavior as an attempt to explain "how small groups, given half a chance, tend to develop social structures." Although his answer is expressed in terms of a modified behaviorism—his friend, B. F. Skinner, really should be shocked by what has been done with his theories—it still constitutes one of the few serious attempts to grapple with the elements of social behavior. Even today, Homans continues to work out the implications of his system. For most professors, tenure means death from the neck up, but even after retirement Homans remains open to new ideas—like those expressed by the sociobiologist, E. O. Wilson. His willingness to listen to Wilson stands in marked contrast to most leftist sociologists. But George Homans is decidedly not a man of the left. We might apply to him the phrase he used to describe Pareto, an "aristocratic libertarian." Although he is not even a theist, he argues that "some doctrine of original sin is crucial to the survival of any religion, and that it would be well for everyone, everywhere, to recite once a day the General Confession of the Church of England." Skeptical of the ruthless idealists who are willing, like Sacco and Vanzetti, to murder or, like Alger Hiss, to betray their country for a cause, he reserves his scorn for the sentimental humanitarians and those who sympathize with "idealists" (what most of us now call liberals):

> They will not go as far as the extreme idealists to use evil means to achieve ends presumed to be lofty. But they will go some distance; they are certainly prepared to lie in what they consider a good cause.

Homans's autobiography comes as something of a revelation. In the mid-1980's we are confronted with a frank, articulate scholar who is also a sociologist; a principled conservative who views politics dispassionately; an aristocrat proud of his family, his people, and his race, who seems immune both to snobbery and guilt. Altogether a sounder head than either of his more brilliant great-uncles, Brooks and Henry Adams, Homans should cause us to reverse the judgment implied by the chronicle of the Adams family, *Descent from Glory*. (TF) cc

Weekend Remedies

E. M. Delafield: *Diary of a Provincial Lady*; Academy Chicago; Chicago.

E. M. Delafield: *The Provincial Lady in London*; Academy Chicago; Chicago.

E. M. Delafield: *The Provincial Lady in America*; Academy Chicago; Chicago.

E. M. Delafield's *Provincial Lady* volumes delighted a whole generation of readers on both sides of the Atlantic when they were first published in the 1930's. It is easy to see why. These diaries of a liberated (by 30's standards) literary (by provincial standards) lady

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(by any standards) are filled with bittersweet observations on the life of the English not-quite rich who seem to spend all their time and money making do. It is Erma Bombeck with style and intelligence, Ann Landers with taste . . . well, actually, there is really nothing quite like Delafield today. Her books belong on that special shelf we keep for guests or rainy weekends, right beside Sherlock Holmes, Waugh's travel books, and the dotty masterpieces of P. G. Wodehouse. Academy Chicago continues its policy of bringing back into print the best prescriptions against ennui—superb frivolity. cc

IN FOCUS

Flat-Footed Intimacy

by Brian Murray

Georges Simenon: *Intimate Memoirs*; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; New York.

Like most people, Georges Simenon would rather read than write. He would rather sleep than write. He would rather take a walk—or a bath—than write. In his odd collection of autobiographical musings entitled *When I Was Old* (1968), Simenon admits that for him writing is an intimidating and laborious process that is less likely to produce euphoria than anguish or even physical illness.

But the unusually relentless Simenon pounds his typewriter anyway. Since he began professionally in 1920, he has managed to crank out more than 200 novels under his own name, nearly half of which feature the exploits of Jules Maigret, the slow but cerebral French policeman. He has also managed to maintain a thoroughly respectable reputation. Despite his prolificacy and his popularity, Simenon is not often referred to as just another potboiling hack. In fact, the fastidious Andre´ Gide more than once announced that Simenon was the greatest French novelist of the 20th century.

Gide went too far. Simenon's prose is sometimes very sharp, but is more often simply plodding. His plots can be taut, ingenious; but they can also be—like too many of his characters—flat and predictable. Undoubtedly Simenon is a couple of cuts above Erle Stanley Gardner. But like Gardner, he appeals primarily to readers who remain charmed by the well-worn conventions of the gumshoe genre: readers who really do care who murdered Roger Ackroyd.

Only the most devoted of Simenon's fans will enjoy hacking their way through his *Intimate Memoirs*. In this uncharacteristically thick book, Simenon puts discretion aside as he chronicles his two failed marriages and describes many of the literally innumerable sexual encounters he engineered throughout his peripatetic life. He writes also of his relationship with his daughter Marie-Jo—a relationship which while not incestuous was certainly unhealthily close. It ended in 1978 with Marie-Jo's suicide at the age of 25. Simenon admits, for example, that Marie-Jo wore his "wedding band," and was privy to the details of at least some of his liaisons. He also appends to *Intimate Memoirs* a long series of apparently unexpurgated letters that Marie-Jo wrote during the final year of her life—sad, pathetic letters in which she refers to Simenon as "Lord and Father" and "my concrete God, the force I cling to."

In these reminiscences Simenon often makes note of his no doubt genuine affection for his children. But in the main he remains eerily detached as he documents the dramas—and the melodramas—of his domestic life. Quite possibly his aloof authorial stance—the same stance that one finds in Simenon's novels—is a protective measure, a way of keeping painful memories at arm's length. But one gets the impression that the utterly self-absorbed Simenon has lived for so long in the world of his fiction that he long ago came to regard the men and especially the women in his life as little more than characters of his own construction. One also senses that Simenon likes to accumulate nice things quite as much as he likes to manipulate human beings; that he regards as incontrovertible proof of his success on earth the fact that he has owned such goodies as a Rolls Royce, a six-car garage, and a bathroom with marble floors.

John Updike once suggested in passing that Simenon possessed "a first rate sensibility." If so, the maker of Maigret has elected not to flaunt it in his *Intimate Memoirs*. The Simenon that one encounters in these pages is largely insensible and curiously hollow. cc

Brian Murray is professor of English at Youngstown State University.

Country Folks Can Survive

by C. P. Dragash

Jeff Long: *Outlaw: The True Story of Claude Dallas*; William Morrow; New York.

Claude Dallas Jr. grew up dreaming of the Wild West. Transplanted from Winchester, Virginia, to Mt. Gilead, Ohio, he pieced together—out of Zane Grey and Louis L'Amour—a land that seemed as ancient and as heroic as the plains of Troy. When he got old enough, Claude went West to live out his dream. With hard work and application he became a first-class buckaroo in Oregon and Nevada—a sort of walking handbook of cowboy skills which were supposed to have disappeared before the Second World War. He gave up cowboying when modern times, in the form of environmental regulations, made the life of the open range impossible. To earn his livelihood, Dallas turned to the more primitive and more lonely life of the trapper.

Claude Dallas never thought much about law or government. When he received the usual notice to report for induction, he simply ignored the letter. He could not, however, forget the humiliation he experienced when Federal marshalls jerked him off the range and dragged him 1000 miles, from drunk tank to drunk tank, back to Ohio. They even cut off his bootheels. In the event, Dallas was acquitted, partly because it

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could not be proved that he had actually received two notices, but also because he was clearly not a draft-resister in the ordinary sense. The experience was enough to make him hate the whole idea of jail, although it did not persuade him that he had to obey the law. At his camp in Idaho, Dallas conspicuously ignored the game regulations. Instead, he adhered to his own code of survival. In the wilderness, a man has to eat. Since only the rich can afford to fly in freeze-dried stroganoff, this meant living off either venison or beef, and Claude Dallas did not eat other men's cows. Besides, the game laws were written by the same snobbish environmentalists who had made the cowboy extinct.

To the extent they knew him, most men respected Claude Dallas as an honest, quiet, hardworking man who had chosen to escape into the preindustrial age. His one peculiarity—and this in an area where gun control is viewed as heresy—was the .357 magnum he always wore on his hip. In January of 1981 two Idaho Fish and Game officers showed up in Dallas's camp. The senior man, Bill Pogue, had a reputation for toughness which endeared him to no one but his best friends. After coming down hard on Claude for his poaching, he took away his .22 trapper's pistol used for finishing off the animals, but failed to notice the .357. Dallas attempted to explain his personal code. Pogue was unimpressed. "You can go easy or you can go hard," he told him repeatedly in the tones of a drill instructor. "It doesn't make any difference to me." Pogue insisted on taking the poacher back to town instead of issuing him the usual citation. The trapper protested: an arrest would mean the loss of his equipment, the death of his mules. Pogue warned him again:

> 'You can go hard. . . . I can carry you out.' . . . 'Hard,' said Dallas, 'that's only one way. That's dead.'

For some time, Dallas claimed later, he had been watching Pogue's hand inching toward his gun (the safety strap was off from the beginning). When the lawman finally reached, Dallas—who had spent years practicing for such a moment—pulled out his .357 and shot Pogue and his partner. A few minutes later, he used a .22 trap rifle to complete the job: one shot in each man's head—the way you finish off a cougar.

It took some time and a running gun battle to catch Claude Dallas. Although his conviction and execution seemed a foregone conclusion, the jury returned a verdict of voluntary manslaughter and using a firearm to commit a crime. The judge sentenced him to 30 years. The outcome of the trial satisfied no one. The family and friends of Bill Pogue were outraged. So were the Dallas family, now living in South Carolina, who firmly believed Claude's story of self-defense. In fact, the jury's compromise is disquieting. If Claude Dallas is guilty of a crime, it is more than likely first-degree murder, a homicide committed in the act of resisting arrest. But there is also another side to the story. A man spends his life getting away from city streets, regulations, and restrictions —all the things that make a man feel

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LIBERAL ARTS

Nolo Contendere

Susan Rosenberg and Timothy Blunk were recently indicted in Newark, New Jersey, for illegal possession of 14 firearms and more than 700 pounds of explosives. Ms. Rosenberg was also charged with driving the getaway car in an unsuccessful $1.6 million Brinks robbery four years ago in which two policemen and a Brinks' guard were killed. The pair responded to the charges with this prepared statement:

> We are not criminals. We are revolutionary guerrillas. . . . We are from an armed clandestine movement within the United States.

We're behind them all the way and demand their recognition as political prisoners. After all, why should they spend 10 years in jail, when they could be shot for treason? cc

less like a man. Finally, driven out of the minimal society of cowhands, he takes to the woods to live with at least the freedom of the beasts. Then, in order to satisfy the prissy consciences of an environmental bureaucracy, two men arrive in *his* camp, to order him around and take him back 150 miles to jail and civilization for what were, after all, minor infractions. (The Idaho Fish and Game had arranged the slaughter of hundreds of deer and left them to rot shortly before the incident.) Claude Dallas was either a murderer or a man who had defended his life and freedom. In either case he is the spiritual descendant of Daniel Boone and Jim Bridger. By locking up the last of the mountain men for a minimum of seven years, the state of Idaho served the cause neither of justice nor of humanity. cc

C. P. Dragash is a practitioner of the manly art of self-defense.

Narcissus Narcosis

William Carlos Williams: *The Doctor Stories*; New Directions; New York.

Carl Rapp: *William Carlos Williams and Romantic Idealism*; Brown University Press/University Press of New England; Hanover, NH.

Literary historians often claim that serious American literature began when Emerson resigned from Boston's Second Church. Rather than continue administering communion, he turned to writing. With the Sage of Concord as its architect, American literature rests upon a shaky foundation. In his farewell sermon, Emerson rested his case on naked egotism: Christianity was valuable primarily because of "the echo it returns to my thoughts." Since communion was not such an echo, it was "not suitable to me." He was confident that Jesus "would approve" of his decision to honor his "own feelings" in this matter.

Even if Emerson was not quite the "Father of American Literature," he did initiate a line of self-obsessed romantics still prominent in our national literature. One writer whose work is usually viewed as objective, unromantic, and un-Emersonian is William Carlos Williams. A practicing physician, Williams had a keen eye for detail and a gift for terse statement. "I have never felt," he wrote in an autobiographical selection included in *The Doctor Stories*, "that medicine interfered with me but rather that it was my very food and drink, the very thing which made it possible for me to write." The way that Williams turned his medical experience to art is clearest in the kind of short stories here collected by Robert Coles. But Williams's short stories constitute a much less important literary accomplishment than his poetry, of which the Coles collection offers only a few medically related samples.

His verse, as Carl Rapp observes in *William Carlos Williams and Romantic Idealism*, is generally regarded as that of "a poet of reality, a poet of raw, unmediated experience." Rapp rejects this view, however, and demonstrates that in both theory and practice Williams was a thorough romantic and a true descendant of Emerson. When Williams appears to be focusing on some external, physical fact—a red wheelbarrow, a dead child, or a filthy river—the reason for contemplating this particular object is its entirely subjective "surcharge of emotion." The "nature" Williams depicts is, as with Emerson, informed by "the most thoroughly consistent egoism in which the soul makes everything into a vehicle for itself." Williams's "perpetual iconoclasm" was another problematic inheritance:

> Confronted by the spectre of a "reality" rumored to be independent of him or indifferent to him—confronted, that is, by the spectral worlds of science, philosophy, art, and religion—[Williams] sweeps all aside, affirming only that which he himself has experienced. In opposition to every account of *the world*, he sets his own world with himself as perpetual center.

Regarded as a pioneering modernist (and more recently as a "postmodernist"), Williams was—like many other writers in this century—one more echo of transcendental solipsism.

WASTE OF MONEY

Little Pigs

by Steven Hayward

Pat Barker: *Blow Your House Down*; G. P. Putnam's Sons; New York.

What can you say about a novel where all the men are invisible, almost-nevermentioned characters, the women—or perhaps we should say, The Women—are all prostitutes, and the overriding "message" is the gloominess and despair Women must endure in modern industrial society? While the ideological roots of this feminist agitprop are muted, it nevertheless allows the reader No Exit. Nor is sleaze any less sleazy when it is superimposed against an existentialist backdrop. cc

Steven Hayward is an editor of the Claremont Review.

Safe and Restful

Stanley Ellin: *Very Old Money*; Arbor House; New York.

A pair of married schoolteachers sign on as domestic servants to an impossibly rich family whose improbable credentials antedate the American Revolution. Little by little they become ensnared in a scheme of murder and revenge plotted by their blind and elderly mistress. Stanley Ellin, a highly regarded writer of mysteries, does not manage to create a believable situation or sustain the level of suspense that this sort of tale requires—a perfect book for an insomniac reader of mysteries. cc

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Zero-Sum Equality

Thomas Byrne Edsall: ***The New Politics of Inequality***; W. W. Norton; New York.

Nothing so troubles the American political scene today as the insatiable demands for equality. When the premise of human equality was originally written into the nation's Declaration of Independence, most of the signers understood it in essentially Christian terms (even if a Deist had written the document). God was no respecter of persons in extending salvation and exacting judgment. This equality was, nonetheless, a mystery, since it came from a God who also granted men a "diversity of gifts." Equality before the law was clearly required, but no one believed that it was either possible or desirable for the state to eliminate the obvious differences among men and women.

But with the fading of religious belief, a broader understanding of equality emerged. Equality had to be realized in *this* world by leveling all degrees of wealth and status. To reach these goals, idealistic politicians in this century launched an array of unprecedented programs intended to bring about equality—for the poor, for women, for minorities, for consumers, for the handicapped, and for any other group who could lobby effectively. The rise of the New Right and the late conversion to free-market principles of old-time liberals is testimony to the failure of decades of burdensome ("progressive") taxation, intrusive regulations, affirmative-action quotas, and arrogant bureaucracies.

Thomas Byrne Edsall refuses to see the failures. Perhaps as a condition of his employment at the *Washington Post*, he remains a True Believer in the Great Society's promises of economic and social equality. For him, the recent rise of political conservatism is only an elitist repudiation of "the concept of equality, stressed by the country's founders." He refuses to believe that "the fundamental policy realignment of the past decade" in any way reflects flaws in the egalitarian agenda or that it derives from "a conservative or Republican realignment of the voters." Instead, he contends that "these policy changes have grown out of pervasive distortions in this country's democratic political process." (Just who was stuffing the ballot box for Reagan, Edsall does not say.)

To make his dubious case, Edsall has to ignore the fact that the rich are actually paying *more* taxes under Reagan than they were before (since tax shelters are now less attractive). Frequently, too, he must slide into doublespeak, as when he writes of the new "distributional shifts favoring the affluent" (i.e., the rich are now allowed to keep more of their money). There *is* a new polarization in American politics, but it is not the result of changes in "the balance of power in the competition for the benefits of government." It is precisely the misguided faith in government as the new guarantor of equality that has fractured society into parties of greed competing for the favors of the state. cc

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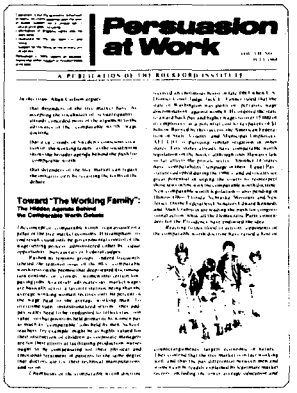

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SCREEN

Between Truth & Schlock

by Eric Shapearo

***Amadeus*; Directed by Milos Forman; Play and Script by Peter Shaffer; Orion Pictures.**

At cocktail parties there are inevitably people who introduce themselves as artists or writers or composers, which seems to mean nothing more than that they consider themselves creative individuals and have no doubts about the validity and usefulness of their work. They *do* work: they write books that are never published, paint pictures that are never publicly displayed, conceive music recorded at their own expense. They are writers, artists, etc., because they believe it to be so. In old and weary Europe, these tormenting self-delusions have been long ago cruelly set into proper perspective: a writer, or artist, is someone the others have acknowledged as such—the title is not self-conferrable. In America, where the matrix of human rights is advanced *ad absurdum*, dreams acquire autonomy, and reality is secondary to the sovereign ravings of an ego.

Perhaps it is this creative everyman attitude that makes possible the success of a mediocre play, turned into a shallow scenario. *Amadeus* oscillates between truth and schlock—one step into the direction of profundity, several steps back into the glib language of advanced film technology. The liberties and frivolities taken with history are in overabundance. Mozart—the putative subject—emerges as a mildly rebellious but immensely likeable "Beatle," wearing wigs and clothes as if for another *Sergeant Pepper* album cover. He is stripped of all connections with the most fertile and inspiring minds and philosophies of his contemporary Europe, whom and which he knew well. His wife, Constance, a fateful slattern, usually blamed for most of Mozart's woes, moves through the screen with all the virtues and charms of a one-dimensional Hollywood ingenue. The obligatory accent of class consciousness is introduced: Mozart is allegedly rejected by aristocratic snobbery and hugged to the bosom of Vienna's "people." The supporting cast of historic characters—Emperor Joseph II and his retinue, represented as a standardized team of court dummies—move with puppet-like mechanicality like the artifacts of an *opéra comique* or *buffo*. The circumstances of Mozart's death and funeral, one of the most poignant and shameful incidents in the annals of Western civilization, are presented with a melodrama that jars with the film's ambitions.

So, what stays are two elements. One is the visual insight into the splendors of Hapsburg rococo, perhaps the most intriguing, heartwarming period of European culture, which set the tone for two centuries of doctrinal orgies, artistic and literary flourish, political and social onslaughts. The movie is shot in Prague, a well-known jewel of baroque and rococo architecture and, in Mozart's time, a veritable repository of future developments in morals, manners, and pleasures. Mozart's music, played against this skillfully sumptuous backdrop, sparkles with intensity and elegance.

The second is Salieri. In general, it is hard to admit that acting can improve what is infirm as literature and cinema. But in this instance, it seems to be exactly the case: the remarkable performance of Mr. Murray Abraham as Salieri carries the role and the character himself far beyond the playwright's, scriptwriter's, and director's interpretation. The scriptwriter's premise is that Salieri hated Mozart because he made him aware of his own mediocrity. The loutish Mozart was one through whom "God sang"—an unbearable insult to Salieri who craved to devote his art to God. A struggle with divine injustice is a serious matter, but the film finally reduces it to a divagation on envy—a deplorable simplification. Historically, Salieri's animosity, even hostility, to Mozart was on record; but not his influence on Mozart's life. But Mr. Abraham transcends the script: he manages to suggest vulnerability and adoration, hate and love, base impulse and torment at the same time, turning his participation in the movie into glory. Which ultimately makes us wonder whether the success of it in New York is not to be looked for in the dilemma of identification. Who reflects the quandaries and malaises of the cocktail-party writer or artist, who fiercely refuses to see him- or herself as just a "peintre du dimanche"? Certainly not Mozart, a genius acknowledged by his time, all his miseries notwithstanding. But Salieri? He knew the bitterness of knowing how good he was and how this "good" was not enough. He was not exactly maltreated, but he did not get his due, either from Providence, or from the world. He was wronged, after all—what a familiar condition. One thing is obviously overlooked in such speculation: namely that, in the end, Antonio Salieri, after 200 years, has a respectable entry in every encyclopedia—and deservedly so. cc

Eric Shapearo frequently reviews films for Chronicles of Culture.

Regress

by Stephen Macaulay

***The Cotton Club*; Directed by Francis Coppola; Screenplay by William Kennedy and Francis Coppola; Orion.**

The art of Francis Coppola requires either epic scope or severe limits. There is no in-between. Actually, the epic is his long suit. *The Godfather*

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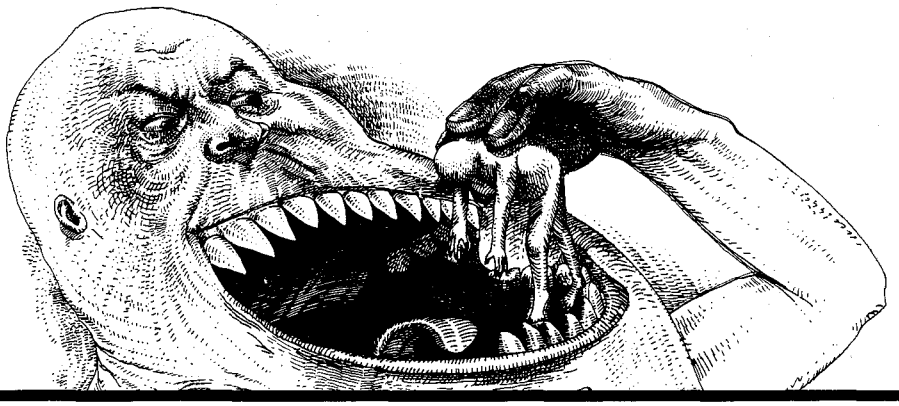

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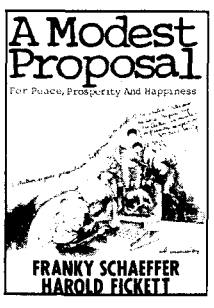

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—both parts and even the TV synthesis—established a place for him beside Welles and Eisenstein, and *Apocalypse Now* harkens back to the grandeur of D. W. Griffith. Coppola can, however, do effective work within tight boundaries, as in *The Outsiders* and *Rumble Fish*, but Coppola cannot work well with flexibility. And flexibility—a bit of give in the sides of the production envelope, horror stories about the road to the $47 million notwithstanding—is what he had for making *The Cotton Club*. The film does have its merits—the sets and the

costumes are authentic, the singing and dancing are first-rate; but apart from the trappings, it has a kind of flimsy rigidity—especially its script by William Kennedy—which would be suitable for an Andy Hardy movie.

And the form is no stronger than the content. Coppola seems to be recycling techniques. For example, there is a pivotal scene when, through cross-cutting, a tap dancer's feet mimic the rat-a-tat of a machine gun. It's interesting, but unlike the baptism scene in *The Godfather*, which had a point, *The Cotton Club* has all the panache of a copybook exercise. cc

Object Lessons

Dune; Directed and written by David Lynch; Based on the novel by Frank Herbert; Universal.

_2010_; Written, produced, and directed by Peter Hyams; Based on the novel by Arthur C. Clarke; MGM.

When the opening credits for *Dune* roll, viewers are exposed to a long list of cinematic technologists. These are the people who built the elaborate SF circa-1930's sets, the creators of the special effects that make an ugly fat man fly and permit slug-like creatures to "fold" space. This multimillion-dollar concern with gimmicks is why David Lynch's rendition of Frank Herbert's novel fails on a grand scale: Herbert is concerned with people; Lynch is concerned with things. At the heart of all of the *Dune* novels is the fact that one woman, Lady Jessica, loved her lord, Duke Leto Atredies, so much that she, breaking the plans of the Bene Gesserit sisterhood to which she belonged, bore Leto a son rather than a daughter. That act of Jessica's, which represents a thoroughgoing commitment to an individual rather than an adherence to a technogenetic program, has universal consequences in the scheme of Herbert's creation.

If *Dune* and its sequels did not have this emphasis on people, they would be crushed under the weight of their own pomposity—which is the case with the film version. Once the human element is diminished by camera tricks, our interest in the saga wanes.

Likewise, there's *2010*, the sequel to *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The December 1984 issue of *Omni* featured *2010* on its cover (an appropriate compliment, since an issue of the magazine appears in the film). Inside, Arthur C. Clarke describes the generation of the various stories that led to his *2010* and points out that he and writer-producer-director Peter Hyams were in daily contact via computers during the making of the movie. Technology is very near and dear to Clarke. In *1984: Spring, a Choice of Futures*, Clarke harps on the decisive role that technology will play in the future of the planet: first, second, third, and developing worlds. Computers, solar-powered transistor radios, and gizmos that Tom Swift dreamed of will, Clarke argues, change the nature of politics; as the people become armed with information, it will no longer be the private domain of "public" servants.

There is an element in *2010* the movie that's missing from *2010* the novel and from the spirit of *1984: Spring*. Low-tech politics are inserted. In *2010* (both forms) there is a joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. space mission much like the actual Apollo-Soyuz mission. In the novel, the American and Russian politicos aren't any more warm toward each other than they are today; naturally, the astronauts become comrades in space. But Hyams, not satisfied with a state of ragged peace on terra firma, introduces a war set off by a U.S. naval blockade off the coast of Honduras.

One might expect that the space crew somehow manages to set things straight, that technology, which they represent, would save the day. Not so. Rather, the beings represented by that black refrigerator-shaped thing that had its debut in *2001* send a stern warning—in the form of a second sun—to the uppity Earthlings. Torn from the context that Clarke placed it in the novel, this trans-solar system semiotician's nightmare has all the serious impact of George Burns in *Oh, God!* cc

ART

Not for Eyes Only

***Leon Kroll: A Spoken Memoir*; Edited by Nancy Hale and Fredson Bowers; University Press of Virginia; Charlottesville.**

An assemblage of reproductions of paintings by Leon Kroll—a middle-of-the-century worshiper of an idealized, white American female body. He was at the same time eclectic in style and a romantic realist with a knack for capturing the inexplicable sweetness of the 1920's and 30's—a shallow impression that gave his art a slightly commercial, Hollywoodish tone without demeaning its aesthetic value.

F. F. Bruce: *Abraham and David: Places They Knew*; Thomas Nelson Publishers; Nashville-New York.

A superb photographic travelogue of the journeys of Abraham and David provided with a readable text by one of the major biblical scholars of the 20th century; a visual guide for religious sentiments.

Mark Wyman: *Immigrants in the Valley*; Nelson-Hall; Chicago.

Images from the Upper Mississippi Country, from 1830 to 1860. Parochi-

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al, moving, making us feel that we can be proud of what was before us.

Laurie Anderson: *United States*; Harper & Row; New York.

Oozing with banal superficiality. An attempt to sum up modernity in America in images and lyrics by a "performance artist," whom her publisher calls a "superstar of the avant-garde." What's "avant-garde" these days?

Edward Lucie-Smith: *Art in the Seventies*; Cornell University Press; Ithaca, New York.

A thorough survey of junk, artificiality, pretentiousness, platitudes, and sterility of what the term "art" tried to encompass during that decade—with a few bright and engaging exceptions.

George Tice: *Lincoln*; Rutgers University Press; New Brunswick, NJ.

The legend of Lincoln cast in stone; monuments and signboards, motels, and groceries—all in the name of Lincoln.

Peter Bacon Hales: *The Photography of American Urbanization, 1839-1915*; Temple University Press; Philadelphia.

Superb evocation of the American past in black and white photography that looks as if it was supposed to dramatize the message of what we have done on this earth.

Frank Whitford: *Bauhaus*; Thames & Hudson; New York.

An honest and meticulous introduction to the name, notion, and reputation (so often maligned) of a school of art and applied arts which formed the modern sense of the visual to a larger degree than most of us wish to admit.

John Fowles and Jo Draper: *Thomas Hardy's England*; Little, Brown & Co.; Boston.

Photographs of Victorian and Edwardian England that bring Hardy and his work to mind with faded pictures that inspire the sort of sober sentimentality that pitches visual realism against nostalgic feelings. cc

LIBERAL ARTS

Academic Doublespeak

American scholars have a hard time reconciling the principle of academic freedom with their desires for political orthodoxy. The solution is found in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*:

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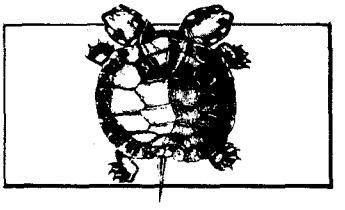

But:

> The MLA urges its contributors to be sensitive to the social implications of language and to seek wording free of discriminatory overtones.

Ah, when lovely * * * * * stoops to folly. cc

CORRESPONDENCE

The World (*Le Monde*) Has Stopped Turning

by Thomas Molnar

Le Monde is on the point of collapse! —screamed headlines in Paris last fall, and they did not mean that relatively unimportant thing, the universe, but the newspaper bearing that title. The collapse of the *New York Times* would be only half as supersensational, because, although the latter is far older than *Le Monde*, it is, believe it or not, only half as influential. The difference is that the French daily is not written for the average 13-year-old, but for elite readers who expect their afternoon dose of subversion to be couched in a suggestive style, the pages to be filled with literary references, and the coverage to be in-depth, intelligent —and biased. More even than in the *N.Y. Times*, the systematic undermining of the Western world is understood to be a profoundly serious business. High KGB intelligence officers would have done well to learn the subtleties of their trade in *Le Monde*'s editorial offices. Perhaps they did.

The announcement of the imminent collapse of *Le Monde* has struck the paper's friends and foes with about the same impact which the sack of Rome had on St. Augustine. To understand the reason, we have to consider what *Le Monde* has represented for the past 40 years.

When Paris was recaptured from the Germans, not a few journalists and financial sponsors pounced on dailies and weeklies, confiscating editorial offices, equipment, and printshops, with the excuse that these publications had collaborated with the occupant. This was no more and no less true than, let's say, our university presidents' collaboration, in the 1970's, with the student rebels occupying their offices; the claim, however, sounded noble enough in a period when an entire nation of men suddenly discovered

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that they had all been active in the Resistance. Among the victims of this "legal" confiscation was the prewar bourgeois daily, *Le Temps*. Within a few weeks, without even bothering to change the lettering, *Le Monde* rose from the ashes of its predecessor. Its editor in chief was Hubert Beuve-Méry, a Christian-Democrat, in French ideological context a left-liberal with, as is natural, a secret desire to please the communists, the victors of the day.

Le Monde paid its staff and contributors well, and more important, Beuve-Méry knew he had Prime Minister de Gaulle's backing. De Gaulle counted on the paper to become the organ of a respectable opposition to his own policies, something to take the sail out of the communist opposition's papers. Did he know of Beuve-Méry's leftist sympathies? He did, but as an ex-right-winger (Maurrassian), de Gaulle needed certification by the left.

From the beginning, *Le Monde* followed, then increasingly led, the leftward orientation of France, the West, of culture, of Church, of justice, of youth. Its brilliant reporters and writers—almost all successful novelists, essayists, professors, and judges, too—became (well-remunerated) workers in the devil's vineyard. They undermined France's staying power in Indochina. They were even accused of carrying documents and dynamite for Algerian terrorists in their briefcases. They were present, from Vietnam to Nicaragua, wherever they could harm Western interests in favor of Moscow, of Mao's Cultural Revolution, of Castro's dungeons, of the massacre of Cambodians. They did so in a style that makes the writers for the *New Yorker* look like country bumpkins, and with the "objectivity" of thinkers inhaling Hegel's *Weltgeist*. Their domestic line was somewhere between the communists and the left-wing socialists. (Since there is no American equivalent, I should say between Castro and Allende, a crack so narrow that you can't squeeze through a blade of grass.) Yet, a few of *Le Monde*'s leading writers have fellow-traveled somewhat naively. When in a Paris weekly I attacked the most prestigious among them, André Fontaine, he replied: "Mon cher Confrère, we are all anti-communists at *Le Monde*. Proof is that the Communist Party keeps denouncing us." I was flabbergasted, but recovered soon enough to remind Fontaine that the communists prefer to attack the weak sisters, not their tough adversaries.

More than any sector of public opinion or political class, *Le Monde* prepared the way for Mitterrand and his communist ministers. In May 1981, the paper almost grew wings in its enthusiastic celebration of leftist power and imminent utopia. By then, in fact long before, in the 1950's, *Le Monde* had become the number one flag-bearer for the world's far left enterprises, terrorists, subversives, cultural corrupters. As a subscriber since 1958—I admit, it is like drug addiction, but *Le Monde* is the best and best-edited newspaper of five continents—I could write volumes on its systematic destructiveness. Its position is, with utmost consistency, on the side of the devilish, the crooked, the obscene; yet always in the name of morality, beauty, truth, humanity, and progress. For this double reason it is one of the most-quoted dailies of the world. When its sister ship, the *New York Times*, needs an "impartial source" from abroad, it is mostly the "independent liberal" *Le Monde* that is quoted. And the latter, always courteous, reciprocates. If anything, *this* is the leftist conspiracy, out in the open and advertised, that naive conservatives search for under the bed.

Yet, even the High Conscience of the World makes mistakes. After the still half-decent Beuve-Méry, his *famulus*, Jacques Fauvet, became director in the late 60's. Under him, the leftist flow became a Mississippi, particularly in matters of culture, always the first symptom of corruption. Everything loose, sex-ridden, and counterculture was now fit to print, while on the political pages McGovern, Olof Palme, but above all Uncle Ho, Allende, and Jane Fonda were celebrated. In fact, one of the political arsonists among the foreign correspondents, Jean Lacouture, later admitted that his reports helped Pol Pot's victory and the Cambodians' extermination. Crocodile tears; Lacouture is now back again, bemoaning Vietnam's "economic isolation."

The mistake came with the new director, André Laurens. *Le Monde* remained just as brilliantly written and edited as before, but now it went overboard. Its readers began to desert it, for a simple reason: until 1981, it had been an "opposition paper" (in fact, it dictated policy to the likes of Giscard); when Mitterrand came to power, *Le Monde* became a kind of official organ; it was thus made indirectly responsible for the Socialist-Communist criminal and grotesque mismanagement. The paper could not distance itself from Mitterrand's absurd policies; in fact, it still led the dance. But readership began to fall. In what must have been a desperate act to recapture the *progressistes*, director Laurens serialized during the summer months of 1984 a story (instead of the usual novel) in cartoon form, depicting endless copulations of the most

LIBERAL ARTS

Ronald the Red

For years the left has struggled to come to terms with the naked facts of the Soviet Union's policy of oppression at home, aggression abroad. Jack Newfield of the *Village Voice* has found the key:

> For me, the left is Jefferson, Brandeis, and Martin Luther King. The right is McCarthy, J. Edgar Hoover, and Ronald Reagan. In my mind, the Soviet Union is part of

> the right, not the left. Its oppression of domestic dissidents like Andrei Sakharov, its miserable role in Poland, its invasions of Afghanistan, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, all make it seem like Ronald Reagan and J. Edgar Hoover have ruled Russia.

Reagan in the Kremlin? Jack would probably prefer to have it the other way around. cc

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explicit kind and with a degree of detail and variety which Larry Flynt might admire. This was too much for the intelligentsia which likes its subversion fully clad—preferably with three-piece suit and necktie.

Laurens turned to the editorial board of writers which owns 40 percent of *Le Monde*'s shares. They voted no confidence in projects of redressing finances. He next turned to printers and other staff, pleading for a temporary reduction in wages. After all, has the paper not been always on the side of the workers, communist-led unions, the suffering proletariat? The proletarians said No to lowered wages, and went on strike. There were days when *Le Monde* did not appear at all. The universe groaned and the *New York Times* remained without quotations. New staff meetings, new pleadings, to no avail. André Laurens left ignominiously the offices that Beuve-Méry had usurped with such a noble gesture exactly 40 years before.

The new director is no other than my "objective" correspondent, André Fontaine. He is an expert in foreign policy—that is the field where our clashes occurred—has a solid, nononsense style, and a willingness endlessly to accommodate the *Zeitgeist*. The question remains, will *Le Monde* survive? If it were actually in danger, the Socialist government would bail it out simply by instructing its nationalized banks to open credit. But there is another disquieting sign on the paper's horizon. While *Le Monde* was struggling against collapse, another daily rapidly made it from a repulsive sheet, a kind of *Village Voice* born in the cultural revolution of 1968, to respectability. It is the *Libération*, whose editor understood the first law of journalism: sharks eat sharks. It is rumored that Mitterrand's wife is behind Serge July, the editor in chief, who last year switched from turtleneck sweater to necktie. Opposition figures have begun to casually drop a hint on television that they are subscribers of *Libération*. When rightist snobs begin coming on board, leftist success is guaranteed. cc

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AMERICAN PROSCENIUM

Vigilantes have thrown a scare into the American press. First there was Bernhard Hugo Goetz in New York, then a pair of men in their seventies, defending themselves against the jungle law currently being enforced on city streets. The word *vigilante* was a clue to the press lords' state of mind. It summoned up pictures of night riders with masked faces, innocent citizens dragged out of bed to face a kangaroo court: 50 lashes for spitting on the sidewalk, public hanging for acting uppity. By definition, a vigilante is a member of a group and participates in a collective action. There is more to this semantic demagoguery than the usual junior college dropout vocabulary of our journalists. The word is out: put Goetz down as a *vigilante* and we're safe.

It is a strange phenomenon when the act of self-defense gets branded as vigilantism, when fending off an assailant can be described as "taking the law into your own hands." What is the foundation of law, if not the security of our persons and property? The law—Roman as well as English and American—has always recognized the right of citizens to repel force with force. In the good old days before religious fanatics reformed the penal system, any crime that threatened life—murder, rape, kidnapping, arson, and even armed robbery—could be punished with death. In such cases the state was only doing what an individual would do for himself if he had to. But in this era of enlightenment, when child molesters serve a year or two in a rest home and murderers are released on technicalities, it is an outrage to think that an ordinary citizen can cheat justice by fighting back.

The punk linguistics of the press were not confined to the usual suspects—the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe*, for example. Even the ordinarily sober *Wall Street Journal*, which was at some pains to defend Mr. Goetz from the charge of vigilantism, still perversely misinterpreted the word: Vigilantes, in their opinion, are private citizens or policemen who "take the law into their own hands, to injure as a form of summary and private punishment." The authors (lawyers, of course) cling to the superstition that judges know what is best for us. Vigilante justice has its drawbacks but it is typically neither summary nor private. At their best, committees of vigilance in Montana and the far West were orderly bodies of solid citizens responding to a breakdown in law and order. Their proceedings were deliberate and public and were usually an expression of community solidarity. If vigilante groups really are arming themselves throughout the U.S., it is because of the widespread perception that the forces of law and order have become powerless to protect us.

But it is not just organized resistance which the journalists find intolerable. They hate the whole idea of self-defense, that a man should presume to think his life is more valuable than the mugger's. The *New York Times* went so far as to suggest that New York law did not give you the right to use force in defending yourself, but it did give you the right to run away. A few

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right-wing wits have been pointing out that at least the *Times* is consistent: they are simply applying their position on arms control to the streets of New York.

Even Mr. Goetz's defenders are alarmed by the implications of his act. Self-defense, they suggest, is only one step away from the jungle. What we need is more police, tougher laws, and stricter judges. With a better system of criminal justice no one will need to carry a gun. Perhaps, but it is interesting to consider that in the Western mining towns described by Roger McGrath (*Gunfighters, Highwaymen & Vigilantes*; University of California; Berkeley), there was little or no mugging, rape, or burglary. The knowledge that every man went armed served as an excellent deterrent to crime. Conservatives like to speak of peace through strength in matters of national defense; perhaps it is time to apply that reasoning on the personal level. The founding fathers considered an armed citizenry the best guarantee against tyranny. If that is so, then we have a right to be disturbed by all those forces in our society who are hell-bent on disarming ordinary citizens.

The media reaction to the Goetz case involves more than just politics or imbecility (not that the two are easy to distinguish). The inability to grasp the real fear in the belly of urban America is a symptom of a disturbing mental deficiency. These people, remember, have all the answers to the problems of the human flesh: social injustice, inequality, the threat of war; but confronted with the facts of urban violence, they can only take refuge in the safe old platitudes of more money for welfare and education, treating the alleged causes of crime rather than the symptoms, the need for more love and sympathy rather than violence. It was no time before they began sniffing out signs of instability in Goetz—a loner with a father who molested children, an excitable man who talked incessantly about crime in the streets. Little by little the image of one frightened man defending his life against four vicious hoodlums was effaced, and there developed, in its place, a picture of four underprivileged youths attacked by a rich white paranoid waving a pistol. Perhaps they are right to be upset. If a vigilante movement ever does get going, the first necks to be stretched may belong to the anchormen and editorialists who are so busy slandering Mr. Goetz. cc

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

1984 is safely laid to rest in the place reserved for last year's Christmas cards and embarrassing love letters. The old calendar did not depart a day too soon. With it go all the allusions to Big Brother and Newspeak that kept popping out of magazine copy with all the novelty and effectiveness of a child's new jack-in-the-box the day after Christmas. Stale customs and forgotten writers will no longer be "down the memory hole" and assistant professors of English may feel free to give up their research on "Rodent Imagery in the Novels of George Orwell: A Semiotic Approach." Among the strangest manifestations of 1984 was the conservatives' unqualified praise for the old socialist-turned-social democrat. It is as if the American right is bound together more by what it hates —communism—than by any shared vision of the common good. To the extent that Orwell had a vision, it was the familiar dream of the brotherhood of man, the pink cloud of utopian socialism. At some point in his career, Orwell probably managed to attack nearly every precept of traditional conservatism. His break with the Stalinist left was unquestionably a principled decision with almost incalculable good effects, but it is also true that Orwell's realization of what his comrades were up to had been helped along by a skeptical and rebellious temperament which destined him to be a man always in opposition. It is our good fortune that he came to regard the left as the establishment. As a critic of the totalitarian left and the myth of progress, he was superb, but there is little in *1984* or *Animal Farm* that can be applied to Western, much less American, circumstances. A prophet he was not; and as a novelist, perhaps the less said of Orwell the better.

The 1984 Jubilee had worse effects than the endless round of conferences (state-sponsored) on Reagan as Big Brother. It also served to eclipse, at least temporarily, Aldous Huxley's genuinely prophetic *Brave New World*. Huxley realized that it was not Leninism that would transform our world, but a devotion to technological efficiency; that we would be more easily distracted from the serious business of living by the refined hedonism of passionless sex and psychedelic gastronomy than by the intrusions of a coercive state. Huxley even foresaw the divorce of sex and procreation through *in vitro* fertilization and the system of state-directed child-rearing toward which we are now making the first steps through tax-assisted day care and the bizarre Swedish notion of children's rights. (Anyone who does not know in what direction the language of rights takes us must have slept through the last 30 years.)

When Huxley wrote his utopian fantasy (1932), he set it some six centuries into the future, but by the 1960's he had come to believe that we were already on the threshold of his Brave New World. It seems odd that, in this Californian age of no-fault divorces and coke-impacted sinuses, we should worry so much about bureaucratic

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Newspeak and TV surveillance of high-crime areas. All this fuss over Orwell, in a way, helps to shield us from the reality of life in the late 20th century. Liberals can play their coy little game of claiming, "It's all happening here," and conservatives can go on pretending that the main danger to our society lies in the missiles of the Soviet Union and not our own failure of nerve. Brooding on Orwell makes it easier to ignore the social and moral implosion which continues, unaffected by the oscillation of parties and political labels. Orwell was too much of a journalist to take the auguries. Huxley was something of a crank; he played at being an aesthete and experimented with "mind-expanding" drugs, but his best novels can still be read with pleasure and a good novelist may be the closest thing to a prophet these times can produce.

Perhaps it is Huxley's fate to go unnoticed. The news of his death was overshadowed by the assassination of John Kennedy, a master of sentimental platitudes and disingenuous pieties. And now as, one by one, his predictions are being fulfilled, we chatter away about Big Brother and tranquilize our paranoia with a dose of prescription soma. cc

Ted Hughes is the new Poet Laureate of England. The announcement came as something of a disappointment, although Hughes was, in many respects, an obvious choice: a poet whose dominant ideology is the safe doctrine of self-expression, a modernist who writes unpleasantly about such pleasant things as wild creatures and the English landscape. There was hope for Philip Larkin or even Kingsley Amis, who have followings beyond the narrow circle of reviewers, professors, and writers who define serious literature in this modern age. But Larkin has been threatening never to write another line of verse. Besides, his taste in versification and penchant for good sense made him too close to the previous laureate, Sir John Betjeman, although, on the whole, there is little enough actual similarity.

And so the mantle of Alfred Austin and C. Day Lewis passes on to a man that calls himself *Ted*, known chiefly to Americans as the husband of the late Sylvia Plath. Feminists still like to blame him for Plath's suicide. In England, Hughes began to be noticed in the 50's. His ambitious and passionate lines rehearsing the old agonies of love and death set him apart from the quiet and ironic tones of so much of the best English verse of his time. Unlike Robert Conquest and Philip Larkin, Hughes did not shrink from grand gestures or emotional proclamations, even on questions like the arms race:

And though bomb be matched
against bomb,
Though all mankind wince out
and nothing endure—
Earth gone in an instant
flare. . . .

These verses on "A Woman Unconscious" also illustrate Hughes's perspective on things. Confronting the apparently imminent destruction of the world, he concentrates on a woman who "closed her eyes on the world's evidence." The personal qualities of Hughes's verse put him in company with confessional poets like Robert Lowell and Sylvia Plath, but as time went on, other qualities —already evident in his early verse —became more prominent. He became a poet of rural life, an observer of beasts in the field, like John Clare or Basil Bunting. In his little book of essays for children, Hughes compared the writing of poetry to an earlier passion of his, hunting animals, and much of his strongest work has been devoted to a hunted otter, a dead badger in the road, or a highly metaphysical crow.

The main trouble with Hughes is that he is a poet of verbal description. Of rhythm and form which set poetry apart from the other arts of writing, he seems to care very little. He writes of "The Thought-Fox" that "If, at the time of writing this poem, I had found livelier words, words that could give me much more vividly its movements . . . the fox would probably be even more real and alive to me now, than it is as I read the poem." While Yeats compared the completion of a poem to shutting a lid on a box, for Hughes there is no completeness, only a straining after vividness. It is probably not unfair to say that many readers have felt the same way, that his poems could be worked over again, that they

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles of Culture*:

The Sword of the State

"The real head of the U.S.S.R. delegation appeared to be the military advisor who held the rank of colonel. He alone lived in a Vienna apartment, whereas all others resided at the Park Hotel about 20 miles south of the capital in Baden. If the West brought up anything important during the informal sessions, the Soviet ambassador would make an impromptu statement and then look at the colonel for a nod of approval."

—from "East-West Talks in Vienna"
by Richard F. Staar

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were no more than drafts, "one way of saying it."

How could it be otherwise? Completeness requires form, an imposition of order upon the chaos of human experience. But modern poets —Hughes is hardly original in this —have retreated into the private world of their own senses, their personal vision. They are capable of dropping a vivid phrase or flourishing a telling observation, but nothing more. That wholeness which gave a sense of organic life to a finished poem, that made a set of verses as real as an otter, instead of just words about an otter —all that is alien to the Hugheses and Ashberrys. It is small wonder that when lovers of modern poetry are asked to name their favorite poets, they come up with a list of fashionable names but can only rarely manage to quote a line or two—not that we can blame them. Most of modern verse is no more memorable than a conversation overheard in a bus station. The appointment of Ted Hughes as Poet Laureate may not mean much in the great order of historical movements, but as a symbol it means a great deal. For all the mistakes that have been made in selection, the laureateship is still the most distinguished appointment that is given to a man of letters in the English-speaking world. The choice has an uncanny way of reflecting the world—American as well as English—we inhabit. The appointment of Southey and Tennyson and C. D. Lewis were statements of a sort, as was the nonappointment of Kipling and Eliot. What is the message we can read out of (or into) Hughes's coronation? Perhaps it is the final alienation of poets from the world. There was a time when poets were beloved celebrities, when Tennyson was mobbed on the streets of London as if he were Mick Jagger; even the late Sir John had a great following among television watchers. In some ways, poets have been the artist *par excellence*, the men of imagination who could reach out to men in the street. Since the last war, all that has changed. Ted Hughes will do a good job as the high priest presiding over the funeral rites of poetry, with (as he described it in an early poem, "Famous Poet") "the haggard stony exhaustion of a near-finished variety artist." cc

A New Old Voice

The Yale Literary Magazine is, as its masthead proclaims, America's oldest literary review. Founded in 1821, the magazine was published illegally at first to allow Yale students the forbidden pleasures of "baudy" writers like Shakespeare. The first number was suppressed by the authorities, but better days lay ahead. From its precarious beginnings, the magazine evolved into a respected journal, which printed Rudyard Kipling, Stephen Vincent Benét, Thornton Wilder, John Dos Passos, and Robert Penn Warren, among others. However, *The Yale Literary Magazine* suffered from the ravages of the 60's. It went bankrupt in 1969 and was sold to Yale Banner, Inc., a yearbook publisher that soon lost interest in its acquisition and sold it to Andrei Navrozov, a young Yale alumnus and an émigré from the Soviet Union, for the princely sum of $1. ("It took this Russian idiot to buy it," he said in a recent conversation. He obviously saw it as a sort of Brooklyn Bridge.) After a year of organizing the American Literary Society as the magazine's new sponsor, Navrozov began in 1979 to write a new chapter in the magazine's long history.

Announcing that they were interested in "nothing sensational, 'modernistic,' scandalous, 'explicit,' or trendy," the new editors set about creating a quarterly magazine dedicated to identifying and preserving the best of serious culture. "We sought," Navrozov explained, "a compromise between the Russian magazines of the turn of the century ('the post-horses of culture')—lavish, expensive, and very good—and reality and practicability."

While some have accused *The Yale Literary Magazine* of trying to be the *Vogue* of the intellectual set, it has featured the work of impressive artists in recent issues: poetry by Robert Conquest, Philip Larkin, and Joseph Brodsky; fiction by Mircea Eliade and Vladimir Maramzin; paintings (meticulously reproduced) by Nicholas Hilliard, Will Barnet, and Fernando Botero, as well as essays by Lewis Lapham, A. L. Rowse, Ernst Gombrich, Thomas Molnar, Lev Navrozov, and Roy Fuller. Some of the contributors have been deliberately provocative by pointing out, for example, the absence of critical standards at the *New York Review of Books* and the *New York Times*' amazing ignorance of communism. The powers that be at Yale had the predictable response to this assault on orthodoxy: they revived their early-19th-century tactics of suppression. For the past two years, the university has held the magazine in court, trying to stop—or control—it. Ivy League schools, after all, can stand only so much academic freedom. Commenting on the litigation, Navrozov remarked: "It's been a tremendous education—and a tremendously rough one."

Still, Navrozov is optimistic. He believes that "the future belongs" to general-interest, small audience magazines like his. "The future belongs to fragmentation, to a multitude of magazines, each with a small but internally diversified audience." Born as the only one of its kind, *The Yale Literary Magazine* is now the unlikely champion of diversity.

What the future holds for the *Lit* remains unclear. If it does manage to survive its storm of litigation, it will still have the hard job of putting together a constructive aesthetic philosophy. Such a project will call for more than good contributors, splendid graphics, and the criticism of protest. It will require time for mature reflection. It may eventually require some degree of alienation from the old Northeastern elites which the *Lit* has been so successful in attracting to its standard. We only hope that the mission of the *Yale Lit* will not be permanently thwarted by the vagaries of due process American style. cc

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A PRUDENT PROGRESSIVE by Leopold Tyrmand

The year of the yuppie?

It seems so, if you read *Newsweek*. Every political season and every decade can be characterized by the emergence of some subclass: its very coalescence into a social phenomenon attracts attention. Every year belongs to this or that mobile or active section of society and the circumstance that the so-called yuppies (a sobriquet as good as any; its accuracy is more phonetic than semantic) are numerically substantial and economically significant does not actually account for their impact on the historical moment. Rather, the intriguing questions are: "Who is going to have them?" and "Did they evolve a sense of common purpose?"

These questions are directly connected to the obvious ideological polarization of the American society and politics. By "who" we understand the ideological competitors for America's soul. One must admit that in order to confuse everybody, the yuppies behave with frolicsome coquetry: cliché-prone newspapermen tend to call them fiscal conservatives and cultural liberals—as if such a mongrelization of attitudes is possible. Yet, Mr. Hart, their first patron saint, got massive support for his insouciant syncretism; later, in the Reagan-Mondale showdown, they unabashedly supported the former who, considering their "lifestyle" philosophy, should have been for them an object of derision—if only for the way he combs his hair. For some, "Who is going to have them?" means "For whom are they going to vote in the foreseeable future?" These observers seem to believe that political destiny, or, at least, political preference, prescribes a generation's soul. As yuppies above all are a generational occurrence, the natural answer should be: they probably will vote for those who will try to find a way to their soul—be it collective, or symbolic, or the consciousness of each human individual.

To credit them as a whole with a cohesive philosophy is pure rubbish. These are people who in their lifetime have cruised from the placidity of the Eisenhower years, through the surrealism of the 1960's, to the hysterical narrow-mindedness of the 1970's, to the neosobriety of the Reagan era. In fact, they should be credited with a psychological resilience: to pass through this revolving door to arrive at a sort of truce between *Zeitgeist* and free will is a glorious achievement. The propagandists, who descended upon them during 1984 like buzzards, call them "the best educated . . . generation in American history," a strange way to describe a generation of dropouts which marched to the electronics industry and Wall Street via psychedelic boutiques and which now looks for guidance from *Esquire* or the "Styles" section of the Sunday paper.

The thing is that they are up for grabs. Any philosophy, ideology, political creed, trend, fashion, school, or style of thinking can have them, provided that it can give them their own sense of value, which they crave and which they must retrieve from under the rubble of our civilization's shattered sense of normalcy. However striking may have been their professional or financial success at forty, their life must nevertheless be filled with something more than what they find in rock videos. It's naive to try to explain them through sociology and statistics and then forecast their future political sympathies. The perception that the road to their political favors leads through economic satisfactions and promise is faulty: as a matter of fact, to make them a social force and, consequently, a powerful political factor, a coherent vision of their collective destinies is mandatory. This can be achieved only through culture. Not before they produce their own Hemingway, who will give them their literary language; their Scott Fitzgerald, who will depict their life and reflect on their bearing, posturing, and grooming; their Faulkner, who will drill their consciences, express their hidden passions, cast them against the good and evil and teach them the profundity of a moral paradox—in other words: not before they see themselves in the mirror of genuine cultural creativity can any speculation about their political role in history have validity. Without this sort of catalysis, they'll soon turn into a socially meaningless sound, like the Okies, whom we only remember for one novel and one movie, or the hippies, who were unable to produce even such meager distinction.

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Democracy is supposed to reflect the free will of the people. Many of democracy's most thoughtful defenders —Alcibiades, Burke, Adams, Tocqueville, Disraeli, to name a few—had some doubts whether it is exactly so. This disbelief never made them either condemn or abandon democracy. According to Churchill, democracy is the worst of political systems, except that it was superior to every alternative. It seems to me, at this date in America, that we know even more and better than Churchill how perfidious democracy may be, but we still stick to it. Thank God. cc

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